



僕の文芸部に
ビッチが
いるなんて
ありえない!

2

赤福大和

[illustration]

朝倉はやて

BOKU NO BUNGEIBU NI BITCH GA IRUNANTE ARIENAI

I won't believe that there's a bitch in my Literature Club

- Volume 2 -

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「育野くん、朝よ。
そろそろ起きなさい」

窓から漏れる雀のさえずりと共に、
優しい声が聞こえた。
僕は胸元から下半身を覆う暖かい温もりを
感じながら、ゆっくりと目を開く。

「でも……男子とお風呂に入るなんて……
無理に決まってるじゃん」



東雲と同じように
髪をアップにしている愛沢は、
赤くなって視線を逸らしつつ。

「すぐく、エッチだよ……..
何で皆、そんなに平然と
してられるわけ？」

そういうのって

普通、結婚してから
じゃないの……?」





高虎天虎

たかとらてんこ

「……だってあんたのこと、
まだよく分からないから
知りたいんだもん」

愛沢愛羽

あいざわまなほ

「耕介くん、遠慮しないで
いっぱい見ていいんだよ。ほらま〜」

亀乃あゆむ

かめのあゆむ

東雲伊吹

しのめいぶき

「この私を普通の女の子と
同じように扱ったなんて、
舐めたものね」

「んっっ……あんまり、
見るんじゃないぞう……。
わ、私だって……好きでこんな格好、
してるんじゃないんだあ……」



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PROLOGUE

I didn't have any motivation to get up.

The reason for that, even myself can understand. Recently, light novel, gal game, anime and such, two-dimensional contents, this is because I am unable to touch them.

As you know, a few days ago, after making a great effort, I somehow gathered club members and successfully prevented the literature club's abolishment. Despite that, why? There will be many people who think so.

Because Aizawa overcame the expulsion disturbance and Shinonome joined the club, with that I could use the literature clubroom, I could enjoy my favorite things to my heart's content——was what I thought.

But in fact, what I desired only came true for only a few days.

...E? "The bitch Shinonome and Aizawa disturbed you, didn't they?"?

Wrong. It's wrong. Such a reason, I might still manage somehow.

The situation is more serious. Thanks to that, right now, I'm dead tired like this in my bed. If it remains as it is, perhaps, I will leave the literature club.

I don't have a space to enjoy my hobby in the clubroom, then it's useless.

"Why did this happen...no wait. That's right...that, letter..."

Saying that much, my consciousness gradually fades away with sleepiness.


CHAPTER 1

THERE IS NO WAY MY SUBSPACE IS BEING ERODED LIKE THIS

“Ikuno-kun, it’s morning. Time to wake up”

Together with the chirp of the sparrow leaking from the window, a gentle voice passed through the room.

Feeling the warmth wrapped from my chest to my lower half, I slowly open my eyes.



「育野くん、朝よ。
そろそろ起きなさい」

窓から漏れる雀のさえずりと共に、
優しい声が聞こえた。
僕は胸元から下半身を覆う暖かい温もりを
感じながら、ゆっくりと目を開く。

“A,.....are, morning already?”

“Yes, that’s right. You, sleep so soundly like that...you must be tired”

To heal my exhausted heart, she shows a smile full of affection.

In the same futon, the girl who is smiling on my chest is Shinonome Ibuki. Working as the chairman in the same class, she’s a beautiful girl with graceful looks. The silky, beautiful black hair as if it is maintained carefully, gently carry the good smell of shampoo. *(The kanji means committee chairman but I didn’t remember that she was one, I did remember that she was his class rep so I translated that word as “chairman”)*

“Un, I guess.....Well.....the literature club is in such state. Other than that, Shinonome... why are you here, in such a place?”

Rubbing my eyes, I ask while my consciousness hasn’t cleared yet.

“Why you ask...Yesterday, didn’t you invite me? You still seem to be half-asleep”

“E, me.....invite you...?”

Shinonome replies calmly, she then pushes her cheek which already changed its color against my chest.

“Thanks to that, finally I became one with you. With this, Ikuno Kousuke is mine. Aizawa-san or Takatora-san, imouto-san as well, I won’t hand you over to them. Because you made me a woman, please take responsibility properly”

Looking closer, Shinonome who is covering me doesn’t wear anything.

In the dark room where the morning sunlight is blocked by the curtain, from the futon I can see her white, slender shoulders and collarbone, it looks awfully sexy.

“Is that so...I and Shinonome, became one”

Shinonome, declaring that she will somehow make me her subservient pet, has joined the literature club

A clear-headed, well-conducted in public, beautiful and intelligent ojousama. If it’s Shinonome who is said to be completely flawless, it must be easy to do something like

ensnaring an otaku like me.

...Perhaps to a flawless superwoman like Shinonome, there is no problem that can't be solved.

Also, I'm sure that she doesn't have any weak point.

While dozing, seeing Shinonome's pure smile that she doesn't usually show, I think of such a thing.

But, suddenly after that――

n? Wait.

I and Shinonome...became one...?

The moment I think so, my hazy consciousness begins to awake.

A man and a woman greet each other in the morning. The sparrows are chirping as if to bless those two. We also don't wear anything.

This, what is this called...Aa, I see.

Hahahahaha――

It's asachun, isn't iiiiiiiitttttttttttttt!?

Finally, having understood the situation, I shout in my mind.

Shinonome is a neat-type bitch who will do anything to obtain what she wants.

Then, if what that fellow just speaks of is true――

tte, impossible! Because last night, I'm sure that I slept alone in my bed! And yet―― why did I sleep together with Shinonome!?

“Are, why are you confused Ikuno-kun? Or perhaps, having spent one night with a cute girl like me, you are so excited that your voice can’t come out? *Maa*, anyhow, it’s understandable that you actually feel it at this late hour. Because last night, after seeing my naked body, you did such a terrible thing...

Shinonome puts her chin on both hands, a flirtatious and mischievous smile appears and her cheeks are dyed red. There is a sign of satisfaction somewhere in that smile, extremely erotic.

“Terrible you said...*Iya*, wrong! B, because. for me to sleep with a bitch like you, there is no reason—”

Ha!

Saying that, I realize

That’s right...this is a dream!

Unless it is, there is no way that I would do an indecent thing with a bitch who I should be cautious of like Shinonome!

“This must be a dream. You are thinking like that, aren’t you?”

“E...?”

The voice of my heart was read, I become dumbfounded.

“Because it was a miserable thing you did. The crime you committed while completely in a trance, you can’t accept it. But, unfortunately this is reality. *Hora*...you understand, don’t you?”

Glued to my sweaty body, She hugs me and turns my consciousness there.

“...n, no way!”

Certainly, her warmth can be felt clearly. On top of that, her soft, small breasts are squashed on my chest, that moist feeling of wet sweat is strangely clear and realistic.

“Then, I really with Shinonome...”

“Yes. Therefore, I will have you take responsibility. From this day, Ikuno Kousuke, you are my subservient pet. But don’t worry, as an owner I will properly take care of you. Pillow talk with you, it’s not such a bad thing and...it may become a habit”

Having an indecent smile, Shinonome crawls up slowly like a female panther.

“Then, let’s sign the contract. With this, you are officially mine”

Lowering her long eyelashes, her amazingly well-featured face comes closer.

“Oi, wait...a bit”

My face becomes stiff because of the fear, I am thrown into despair. Like that, her lips approach,

“That, I become a bitch’s thing like that...a, aa———”

It can’t beeeeeeeeeeeeeee!!

——san———Nii———n———

A far away voice similar to calling me passed through the space, my conscious is quickly scooped up.

——Nii-san, it’s morning. Please get up”

“U, uu...a, are, that voice is...Shar, te...?”

When i seriously open my eyelids, before my eyes there is a pretty face that could be mistaken as an angel’s. Bathed in the morning sunlight, her sparkling silver hair is lovely, the white skin looked like fresh snow is beautiful.

“Good morning, Nii-san. ...Other than that, are you all right?”

The usually expressionless Sharte, wearing something called a white shirt, is continuously looking at my face.

So, as expected, it was a dream just now...?

Becoming something like a neat-type bitch's thing, I don't even know how I would be treated.

It's good because it's really a dream——Thinking so, I breath a sigh of relief.

"Gomen Sharte. I had a slightly scary dream"

"As expected...Nii-san, because you made a terrible sound just like having a nightmare"

I'm stared with a quiet gaze without emotion.

I'm sure that other people won't know what Sharte is thinking right now.

But I who have been together with her for many years know.

"Sharte, you don't need to worry. Because it's already all right"

"Nii-san, lying is not good. Because, your body is still trembling"

Only after she said so, I notice that my whole body is trembling weakly.

In middle school period, I experienced trauma because of a neat-type bitch. In short, I had to act as a practice partner for her to accumulate experience to go out with her favorite boyfriend well, it seemed to take root in my depth psychology unexpectedly

"n"

To make me feel relieved, Sharte hugs me tightly, burying my face in her chest. The slender, petite body is warm, feeling the warmth of a family member, my trembling gradually lessens.

Why I had such a realistic dream, I can understand a little.

Maa, it's just the usual thing, Sharte is always glued to me like this before I get up.

“Sharte, thank you. Thanks to you, it seems all right now”

“Is it true?”

“Un. Therefore, can we separate soon?”

“...”

After having stared at me fixedly, she once again buries my face in her chest and hugs my body tightly.

“I hate it”

“E...hate, why?”

“...Nii-san, there is a scent of woman when you come home recently”

“u”

Shinonome sticks to me in the clubroom frequently, when Aizawa talks to me, somehow she’s close to me too. Therefore, perhaps the smell of perfume and such are transferred. This Sharte is surprisingly sensitive...

“Etto, Sharte. But only that, why do you not want to separate?”

“Nii-san, this is marking” *(the word マーキング in Japanese basically means rubbing part(s) of the body against something to leave the scent to indicate things/territory/...., unlike animal marking which is often related to urine/feces)*

“Fua!?”

Because of those unexpected words, I unintentionally make a sound.

“Iya, marking you said...you are not an animal, why such a thing...”

Then, Sharte raises her head and with a small voice.

“Nii-san is, my nii-san”

gyuu again, she pursues me with her slender arms. In order to completely transfer

her smell.)

Does she not want me, her brother, to be taken by someone else very much?

Haha. Such jealousy, this girl Sharte is so cute.

I think so and pat my imouto's head while smelling the fragrance of shampoo from her.

"Sharte, I will be your older brother forever. Don't worry"

"...Things like not returning home, you won't do it?"

"Of course. That time, I promised to always be by Sharte's side, didn't I?"

"Nii-san..."

Sharte raises her head, the usual eyes in which you can't feel the life are open wide. After fixedly staring at me for a while, Sharte eventually raises half of her body and sits astride on me quietly.

"Really, Nii-san always think about me in the first place, right?" *(i'm so tempted to keep the "ne" as i don't think right/isn't it tag questions can show the character's emotion)*

Of course. Sharte, when I'm not there, would search my room to confirm her brother's preference in detail, just like a restraining-type imouto bitch, but the fact that she's my very important imouto doesn't change.

"It's natural for you to be the first. After all, Sharte is my irreplaceable important family member"

"...the first...then...Nii-san——"

Sitting on my thighs, the expressionless Sharte shakes her lower half back and forth as if asking me (ねだる = *tease/ask/solicit*)

"While you are thinking that I'm important, please make me a woman"

.....is it déjà vu, this topic?

I recall the content of the dream a while ago, then raise half of my body and face Sharte.

“Hold on Sharte, I did say that you and I are brother and sister before, didn’t I?”

“*Hai*, But as expected, I’m not interested in any man except Nii-san”

“Not interested you said...*Iya*, being loved by a cute imouto like Sharte is surely nice. But according to me, you are an existence which is more important than a girl”

Because of the circumstances of my parents’ works, in the past I often felt lonely. But because Sharte came, such bitter feelings had disappeared.

“I’m truly grateful to Sharte. Therefore, there’s no way we can have such a frivolous relationship...because for me, Sharte is a very important person”

Sharte doesn’t avert her gaze, she continues to look at my eyes fixedly.

But she suddenly gets off from the bed and turns her back, which is covered by her silver hair, around.

“Nii-san, I must prepare the breakfast soon”

“*E.....uwa!* It’s that time already!?”

Looking at the clock, it was the time when it would be bad if I didn’t get up.

Although it feels like the talk was glossed over, I get out of the bed and go towards the door. And just like that, as usual Sharte entwines her arm with mine.

“Nii-san. Today’s dinner, there will be Nii-san’s favorite borsht and beef stroganoff”

“*E*, seriously!?”

Sharte was a war orphan from Russia who was taken by my parents.

The Russian cuisine which Sharte occasionally serves are very delicious, they are my favorite.

“*Are...*But today, is not some special day, isn’t it?”

“... ”

While opening the door, I ask.

The expressionless-as-ever Sharte doesn't reply, only comes close to me as usual. Etto, somehow I don't understand well.

But for now, today's Sharte seems to be in a very good mood.



"Kya"

Inside the air-conditioned train.

I lend my chest to a beautiful girl.

"A, sorry Ikuno...for grabbing you, because there isn't any place to hold"

"U, un. It's really crowded, isn't it? So you don't need to mind particularly"

Having finished breakfast with Sharte and left the house, I happened to ride on the same train with Aizawa. Behind Aizawa is the door, standing in front of her is me.

When she separates her hand from my chest quietly, Aizawa looks up at me while having an embarrassed smile.

"The train is always crowded in this hour, it's troublesome isn't it—ahaha"

The blond, big-breasted, beautiful gal, Aizawa Manaha.

Today as well, she's wearing the uniform stylishly, while carrying high-quality branded goods.

Nonetheless—Although Aizawa seems to be a gaudy, easy girl no matter how you look at her, in fact she's a good girl who is very pure and always thinks of her family.

Having joined the literature club when it was in danger of being abolished, for me she's an angel-like existence. Well, but...

Although I understand that she's not a bitch, the fact that Aizawa is a beautiful girl doesn't change.

All the beautiful girls whom I met so far, they were creatures called bitch (hateful woman).

I wonder if because they are bitches so their faces become good, or because their faces are good so they become bitches――

Such a mechanism doesn't matter.

But, because Aizawa is a beautiful girl, the possibility of her growing into a bitch is possible.

Therefore, just in case, I'm thinking while including Aizawa in the bitch group...

But, Aizawa is truly a good girl.

As the only child of a fatherless family, she works in a maid cafe to get money, even just a little, to help her mother. Besides, her family finance is tight so she tries her best to study, she is a hardworking person who was enrolled as scholarship student with school expenses exemption.

Even if I accidentally did an ecchi thing, she would seriously listen to my excuse without using violence like two-dimensional heroines, even if I fell down or had a nosebleed, she would anxiously nurse me devotedly. Such a very good girl.

...Therefore, well, that.

For me, perhaps this is the first time I met such a beautiful girl...

She's really a special girl.

While thinking about such a thing, I send my gaze to Aizawa unintentionally.

"...n"

She's grimacing as if felling painful somewhere and looking slightly downward.

"Etto, Aizawa. By any chance, your physical condition is not good?"

“E? A...*uun*, it’s not, like that but”

Saying that, perhaps Aizawa too

“Then, are you tired because of the club activities?”

“Club activities? A, maybe a little”

As expected. *Maa*, it’s natural because of the current situation.

“A, but...right now it’s not that, I...*uu*”

“Aizawa?”

Looking closer, despite the thin make-up, her pure white cheeks become slightly red.

W, why suddenly. What happened?

Although I feel slightly uneasy, I notice that Aizawa’s left hand is drawing near her buttocks as if to brush something off while she’s moving restlessly.

“E?”

Looking to Aizawa’s left side, there is a standing *ojisan* (reading the newspaper while smirking), whose hand is about to touch her easy delivery-shaped buttocks, his hand is reaching out to her short skirt persistently.

Wait, *e*...this is...

Chikan, isn’t it!?

I become stiff unintentionally.

After all, speaking of chikan, it is reported in the news or in the articles on the internet.

Before such an unrealistic act, there is no way that my head isn’t confused——but.

“...d, don’t...”

Hearing the frightened-like shrieks that seems to burst into tears at any moment, I calm down.

“__ っ!”

“...E...Ikuno?”

The androphobic Aizawa—my angel who helped the literature club, what are you doing to her, *ossan*?

Before thinking about such a thing, my body naturally moves.

“*Gomen*, Aizawa. Please endure a little until the next station”

gyuugyuu In the already stuffed train. I forcibly put my body in a state that my butt is facing that *ojisan*, and hug Aizawa who almost broke her posture. Thanks to that, the two warm, big swellings suddenly push against my chest and change their forms, the sweet smell drifting from Aizawa makes my heart throb faster.

“Wai, what are you doing...Ikuno, everyone around us can see”

The abashed Aizawa says in a low voice, moves slightly to resist—at that moment.

Gatan! (SFX: crash)

“*Kya*”

The train shakes, Aizawa leans against my body vigorously.

“...Aizawa, it’s dangerous, so please stay like that for a while”

This, this is to protect her from the chikan.

By no means my purpose is to thoroughly enjoy Aizawa’s small, soft body.

“...U, un”

Seemingly resigned, despite worrying about the surrounding’s eyes and blushing, she

nods deeply.

— — *E*...?

to, somebody is touching my butt. Turning back, it's the hand of the *ojisan* a while ago.

Sawa, sawasawa...sawasawasawasawasawa! (さわさわ: rustling sound, indicate touching)

Uwaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaaa!



It seems like this *ojisan* has a unique fetish, he looks gladder than the time he was about to touch Aizawa.

And in the end, I continued to endure that disgusting feeling until we arrived at the next station.

“Ikuno, thank you for helping me a while ago!”

Leaving the ticket gate, while walking on the street, Aizawa, who is next to me, thanks while smiling like an angel.

“It’s fine. It’s not such a big deal. Ha, hahaha”

In the heat of the end of June, I laugh with a disheartened face.

Haa...it’s how it feels to have your butts touched by an *ojisan*, huh?

Making the girls feel unpleasant like that, those *chikan* are really the worst.

Aizawa, who continuously averted her gaze from my face a while ago, is looking at me with a gentle expression. While shaking her golden hairdo lightly,

“Ikuno. But, although you usually seems unreliable, at times like a while ago, you are very reliable, aren’t you? I, after the matter a while ago, have to review Ikuno again♪”

She shows a pure smile that can capture any boys, my chest throbs unintentionally.

“*I, iya*...you don’t need to review”

I mean, until when we left the ticket gate, Aizawa was bright red and taciturn, and yet...she changes so fast, doesn’t she?

That simple part of her is the same as before.

“Other than that Aizawa, the other day, thank you for treating me”

I become ashamed after suddenly mentioning the story a few days ago.

“He? Aa, is it, by any chance, about the date last week?”

“Un. Five days has passed since that day, it is very late but”

“I told you, it’s fine. Surely, it was a date for me to gain my love experience, but hora, it also had a meaning as my gratitude because Ikuno helped me with my expulsion problem”

I recall what happened a few days ago.

Several days after the expulsion disturbance, I and Aizawa had a date. During that, because a rain suddenly began to fall, Aizawa’s mood became bad, but when we entered the same umbrella together, for some reason her mood brightened up. After that, following my choice we entered a small fashionable coffee shop for a tea break, then we did window shopping at the nearby outlet mall (the place where we bought Aizawa’s underwear), we was fully enjoying the mock date.

“Maa, it may be so but. I enjoyed it too, so I seriously want to thank you”

“...Is that so? Ikuno too, enjoyed it”

Aizawa looks downwards and murmurs emotively. And, she bites her lips tightly.

“Ikuno, that...a while ago, why did you help me?”

“E? Why you ask...well”

It’s pointless to deceive in particular, should I answer honestly?

“When I thought that I must protect Aizawa, it was like my body moved on its own, I think?”

“Your body, on its own? ...It, it’s so”

After looking at me and blinking **pachipachi**, she looks downwards once again and suddenly smile (ハチハチ + *blinking* = *incessantly*)

And then, suddenly she goes around and stands in front of me with her hands crossing behind.

“Ikuno! After school today, can I treat you something again?”

“E? Why suddenly? It’s particularly fine but, something like that make me feel bad”

“*Un*, don’t worry about it! Because I want to do it. What would you like? Crepes, cakes or donuts? As for me, I recommend the pastry shop in front of the station”

Aizawa, without wariness, shows an innocent smile at point-blank range, my face turns red unintentionally.

“*tte*, all of them are sweets, aren’t they...Aizawa, you always eat something like that?”

“W, what...is it bad? I didn’t become fat in particular so it’s fine, right?”

Surely she didn’t become fat.

Or rather, her breasts boasting about its full-of-sexual-feelings deep cleavage did. She has a thin waist too, and her legs which are wrapped in the loose socks are slender enough to make the models envy.

...Nevertheless, maybe it has been a while since the last time I saw Aizawa get angry.

Incidentally, she has androphobia.

Thanks to that, she always seems to have a forced smile in front of the opposite sex. But for some reason, she seems to be able to come in contact with me as her normal self, and occasionally gets angry like this.

Haha, why, I wonder?

Aizawa shows her angry face to me, but maybe because this is like a preferential treatment, I don’t feel bad.

“Gomen gomen. A, other than that Aizawa, have you read that manga?”

“E, manga...?”

“*Un*. The one I lent to you a few days ago. Though I think you said that you would read and return it in a day”

I think it was the day after the recent date.

Knowing that I love manga, Aizawa suddenly said “I want to read Ikuno’s favorite work!”. Therefore, this week’s Monday, I lent a certain manga to her.

“...a, aa! That manga. *Etto*...In fact, I was busy with my part-time job so I haven’t read it yet... I, I will finish reading and return it properly so please wait a little more. Ahaha”

Aizawa smoothes down her beautiful golden hair restlessly and laughs awkwardly.

“Is that so? *Maa*, in that case, it’s fine in particular”

Because Aizawa is a good girl, she won’t do something like borrowing without returning.

But, because I want to hear Aizawa’s impression even just a little sooner, I want her to hurry as much as possible.

While thinking of such a thing, I and her arrive at school.

Then, from behind us, a black limousine passes and stop in front of the school gate.

“Today too, appearing with a luxury car as usual huh?”

When I smile feebly, a middle-aged man goes down from the driver seat and opens the rear seat’s door.

Taking that male retainer’s hand, from the inside of the car long and slim legs wrapped in tights can be seen.

And, the person who is treated like a princess of a country has appeared, someone who also appeared in today’s dream——

“A, Ibuki!”

“*Ara*, good morning Aizawa-san. You looks lively today too”

Right, it’s the neat-type bitch, Shinonome Ibuki.

Smiling gracefully to Aizawa, the envious look from all the students going to school

are sent.

And then, as if it's natural, my figure is captured by the sharp eyes, she joyfully laughs thinly.

"Isn't it Ikuno-kun? Was you with Aizawa today, I wonder?"

"W, well. We were on a same train by chance"

Uu...as I had a dream about doing ecchi thing with that girl this morning, I can't take a straight look at her face.

"We happened to ride the same train by coincidence! And then, Ikuno repulsed a chikan for me"

"Hee, Ikuno-kun did? To be able to protect a club member as if it's natural, aren't you a wonderful club president?"

Uwaa, that unable-to-stomach-something-like manner of speaking. And that smile seems scary too...

"Other than that, we will become a hindrance if we stay here. We should move soon"

Aizawa and Shinonome, two popular, great beauties that our grade is proud of.

If such two girls keep standing in front of the school gate, many students will stop moving and surround them.

Although I, who hate standing out, feel awkward, I begin to walk together with these two.

"A, Shouko and Mutsumi, ohayo—!"

And, being called out to by her two friends, Aizawa begins to talk with them like that.

"...Haa"

Are? I think they are certainly talking about the chikan story but.

Shinonome suddenly let out a sigh, her well-featured face becomes slightly clouded.

“*Oi Shinonome*, perhaps, you are tired because of the club activities, aren’t you?”

Being asked, she opens her surprisingly clear pupils wide.

“*Ara*, Ikuno-kun worrying about me, isn’t such a thing unusual? Worrying that much?”

“*I, iya*...it’s not like that in particular. But I’m more or less a club president, if my club member is like that, I think I should quickly do something about the busy situation currently”

“Is that so?—*Fufu, maa*, I wonder if I should leave it like that”

Shinonome says so and have a suspicious laugh, then she says while her hair is fluttering.

“But, it’s the fact that I am tired because of the club activities”

“As expected? It’s like that, isn’t it”

“Right, moreover, together with that I’m the school festival’s executive committee now. Being the class chairman and the student council president’s assistant, the executive committee and the current literature club, I become tired as expected”

About 10 days left until the arrival of Urotan high school’s school festival.

Each class’s committee members are scheduled to hold an additional post as the school festival’s executive committees. So it has, without question, finally come into the hands of Shinonome, who was already overloaded with other works. By the way, in the meeting a little while ago, it was decided that our class would do a maid cafe, the preparations have already begun.

“It would be nice if someone could heal my fatigue. Right, Ikuno-kun?”

“*Ano*, I’m not your slave. I won’t massage your shoulder even if it’s an order”

“Aren’t you misunderstanding something?”

“...W, what is that?”

“I get you to listen to my request in exchange for joining the club. You didn’t forget

that, right?”

Because there are people around us, she kindly says to the end.

That reminds me, didn't she say something like that the other day? As a result, it was Shinonome who finally saved the literature club. I was very grateful, and wanted to do something to help her.

“...Because of that, what do Shinonome want me to do?”

“Well, what's good I wonder. You who usually don't listen to what I said is now listening to my request. I end up hesitating because it feels like a waste...*Ufufufufu*”

It's seriously scary, you know!?

As a neat-type bitch who excels at planning, no doubt that she would request some unthinkable thing. In fact, she joined the club for that purpose...

From there, Aizawa who has finished talking with her friends comes back.

“Sorry you two, I've let you wait——other than that, Ibuki, about the maid cafe's clothing, I have bought the re-corrected version based on everyone's opinion, can you check it later?”

E, the correction instruction was given yesterday and yet, you already remade it? Aizawa is amazing.

However, Shinonome smiles as if to say it's as expected.

“As one would expect, Aizawa-san. After all, putting you who said “Sewing is my forte” as the leader of sewing group was a correct answer. Well then, can you show it to me later I wonder?”

“*Un*, of course! Also Ibuki, about the CD I borrowed yesterday, thank you. Listening to the violin made me calm down very much. Again, if there is any recommendation, I want to borrow if possible”

While entering the entrance, Aizawa takes out a cute pouch from her bag and passes it to Shinonome.

“It’s good if you are pleased. Well...Because you like Heifetz, who is called[King of violinist], next would be, for instance, Ginette neveu, I think? The timbre is very bewitching, I really love it”

“Is that so? Then, next time can I borrow that person’s? I am, the type that think of wanting to know such things like the preference of the people I love, so I am very happy to know Shinonome’s favorite things♪”

“㇏———Haa...mou, you are truly an honest person, aren’t you?”

Her cheeks slightly redden, although Shinonome is astonished she shows a smile full of intimacy

“Because, I like Ibuki very much♥”

“*Fufu*, aren’t you really a child? Other than that, we can’t take off the uwabaki like this so can we separate?” To the friendly Aizawa who is hugging her, Shinonome who doesn’t seem to be annoyed asks.

U—n, what can I say?

Really, these two are steadily getting along well with each other.

Seeing that is very pleasant——However, on the other side they are bitches who lead the boys around by the nose.

But, then I suddenly think.

Are? Just now, Aizawa said she wanted to know the preference of the ones she loves, didn’t she?

Then perhaps, when she borrowed my favorite manga...in other words, to me...

HA! W, what are you thinking, me!?

Wrong wrong, Aizawa decided to borrow on a whim.

Such a charming, gaudy and popular girl, there is no reason to show an interest in an otaku like me. Moreover, she seemed to understand she must give preferential treatment to someone else as she has already borrowed from Shinonome. (extremely not sure about this one, but maybe it's to avoid jealousy?)

Un. As expected, it must be on a whim.

And then, while three of us are going towards the classroom. In front of the infirmary, we come across a familiar face.

"A, Kousuke!"

A small girl having an unique hairstyle with nekomimi-like bunches.

She's undoubtedly my childhood friend — Takatora Tenko.

"Ten-nee. ...*Etto*, what happened?"

It was Ten-nee who first spotted me and suddenly showed a cheerful expression, but she seemed to remember her companion whom she lent her shoulder to, she now has a serious look and says awkwardly.

"That, as her physical condition seemed to be bad, club president collapsed in today's morning training..."

At a glance, Ten-nee's body is wrapped in cheerleading-like costume, with a short vest that makes her navel visible and the so-called pleated skirt.

Next to her, borrowing her shoulder, there is a female student wearing the same costume and looking downward.

On the opposite side of Ten-nee, there is another senpai-like girl supporting that girl.

"Collapsed you said...Takatora-san, is the club president all right?"

Being asked by Aizawa, Ten-nee who is preoccupied with me finally notices that existence.

"...Aizawa Manaha. Also, Shinonome Ibuki. You people, didn't do something strange to Kousuke, did you?"

Being vigilant against these two, Ten-nee stares at them with sharp eyes, but Shinonome, having a cool smile, replies. *(the word here is “kawasuu”, as in exchange arguments, but reply seems easier to understand)*

“We did nothing particularly. Other than that, you said president of cheer club, then isn’t this Kamenno-senpai?”

“E...Who? Did you, know me...?”

Muttering with a frail voice, the person called club president who is supported by two girls raises her face.

The girl with idiosyncratic hair type whose hair pops out here and there, she puts her long, light brown hair into a braid behind her back. About her height, she’s the highest among the girls here.

A woman with good quality, her big, drooping eyes possess both intimacy and loveliness.

Also, it’s amazing...her breasts, so big.

They are one size bigger than Aizawa’s, making the logo on the uniform swell out **panpan** (SFX: something filled to the point of bursting)

While I’m astonished, Shinonome looks deeply at me while smiling.

“Nice to meet you, I’m the student council president’s assistant, Shinonome Ibuki. I heard the rumors about Kamenno-senpai from the president for quite a while. A very popular person similar to the president, and from your classmates you are a dependable person”

Hee—. A frail person like that, having such a side is unexpected.

“A, it’s like that... If I’m not mistaken, Ibuki-chan is the girl who stood out very much in that meeting, right? Two people there, too. ...Was it different, I wonder?” *(this girl uses “kana”, which is used by both men and women, while Shinonome uses “kashira”, which is more feminine, both are translated as “I wonder?” tag question)*

Although she seems to be in pain, Kamenno-senpai smiles wryly, her eyes are blinking with surprise.

But then, the black-haired girl supporting her anxiously interjects.

“Wait Ayumu. Your physical condition is bad, so don’t just stand there talking and go to the infirmary”

“E, but...now isn’t it the rare chance to meet the noticeable first-year students?”

“Ayumu, think about your body even just a little! Because, me too, everyone is the club as well, are worried about you!”

“A, Yuki-chan...”

Being persuaded with a loud voice, Kamenno-sempai has an uncomfortable face.

Uwa, somehow it’s very awkward here.

Only silence flows. Even Shinonome and Aizawa too are at a loss and are perplexed.

Then Ten-nee makes a smart move in panic,

“*E, etto...*! T, the one I’m lending my shoulder to, working as the president of cheer club,

is Kamenno Ayumu-senpai. And this person is the vice president, Kurashima Yuki-senpai...and then...after that”

Ten-nee is at a loss. Being unable to just watch without doing anything, soon Kurashima-senpai’s grim face suddenly becomes softer.

“Tenko, and also you three, Sorry for making you worry. Third year, Kurashima. Please treat me well”

I thought she was a scary person, but when she smiles I feel like she’s a kind onesan.

She has lustrous black, shoulder-length hair, and has a calm atmosphere around.

Although she doesn’t have breasts, her thin hands and feet and her slender figure make me unintentionally watch in fascination.

“Yuki-chan is really hot-tempered, right? Sorry, everyone. I think we have made you

scared”

After being irritated by those words, Kurashima-senpai breathes a serious sigh.

“You know...I don’t want to get angry at Ayumu too. But, because you acted rashly and did your best too much, I had no choice but saying those words”

“But, it’s for our last tournament. I think it is inevitable to force myself to work hard
———”

“I understand what Ayumu wants to say. But, it’s meaningless if you, the crucial member, collapse, isn’t it? Besides, the club is in such a state too...to observe the situation, you should also take a few days off——”

“——I can’t allow such a thing”

The gentle-looking drooping eyes, change to those with sharpness instantly.

Hee, she’s able to make such a face too.

Because she’s the club president of a veteran school, she has a strict side as a result.

“You understand that we don’t have much time until our last competition, right? I believe the other schools too have entered the phase when they focus intently on it, I have come this far so there’s no way I can cut corners. Besides, to support our advisor – Kawagishi-sensei who just took a maternity leave, the only thing that we can do is to leave behind a result, right?”

“That, is right but...more than that, the club’s members is in such a state then——”

“Yuki-chan! We promised not to talk about that story except in front of the club members, right?”

As if the story is a great taboo, the Holy Mother-like face becomes strict.

“*Go, gomen*, Ayumu...unintentionally, I”

Kurashima-senpai looks down in remorse state.

Seeing that figure, Kamenno-senpai doesn’t criticize her anymore.

Kameno-senpai separates from two girls supporting her and stand up by herself, shows the original comfortable smile. “Ma, that’s why, Yuki-chan, pay attention from next time, okay? And, my physical condition improves

just by talking like that, seems like it’s fine even if I don’t go to the infirmary”

When she claps her hands **pan**, her breasts also shake **purun** (*purun = sfx, shaking like jelly*)

“...What are you saying, Ayumu? Your complexion is still bad, you must take a rest now”

“T, that’s right buchou. Even if the club doesn’t take a day off, right now...”

Although Kurashima-senpai and Ten-nee say so.

“I told you, I’m fine. Other than that, we still have a little time, let’s return to practice”

“Wait...with that body and yet you still intend to do!? A, wait Ayumu...!”

Then, Kameno-senpai turns back as if remembering something.

“Aa, anyway, Ibuki-chan, Ikuno-kun, Manaha-chan, the next time we meet, let’s talk slowly, okay? Bye bye”

“A, *hai*...good bye”

When Aizawa was in danger of being expelled, because we stood out in the meeting so it seems like she remembered our names.

Other than that, what kind of bad story that only the club member can hear?

I see the two senpais off while thinking of such a thing. And then, Ten-nee runs towards me.

“K, Kousuke, I’m glad to be able to meet you this morning...then, see you later”

Looking up at me with moist eyes like she's excited, the blushing Ten-nee leaves while smiling joyfully.

Ten-nee, her face seems to be very happy. Does she still like me?

...uh, as the opposite sex.

To be honest, I was very embarrassed although I haven't known how I should cope with it yet.

"Such a passionate love call in the morning, right, Ikuno-kun?"

"U...it's fine, I think?"

"...Ikuno, somehow you are effeminate"

Aizawa mutters some words, for some reason her leaked voice sounds like she's sulking.

Etto, this depressing atmosphere is just my imagination, right...?

When I'm having trouble responding, Shinonome looks downwards and smiles, then changes the topic.

"Incidentally, other clubs also have trouble with the activities too, right? We also should do our best"

"A, ahaha...certainly. But perhaps, I think the situation today would be the same too"

"Aizawa, it will be helpful if you do not talk about it..."

Thinking about the thing after school, my one-day motivation begin to decrease.

Haa...Please, return to the normal literature club today.

Such a wish of mine cannot come true.

After school, we dejectedly walk on the special ridge to the clubroom. Seeing the

students lining up in the corridor, Shinonome too puts her hand on her forehead and sighs.

“Finishing the preparation for the school festival and then facing this amount, it’s tiresome, as expected”

But, we have no choice but to do it.

Because, the literature club right now, its job is to listen to the troubles of the students
— — —



“My boyfriend is cheating. What do you think I should do—?”

The three of us is sitting on the sofa, in the form of an interview we are listening to the story of the consultant.

By the way, the number of consultants compared to yesterday has increased two-fold, becoming about 20 people.

“With just that much, it’s not possible to say anything. In the first place, do you know something that might be the cause?”

As the consultant is a third-year student, Shinonome asks using honorific language.

“*Ano*, I think so, too. You said “He loved me so much” and yet, suddenly boyfriend-san is having an affair, it seems unthinkable so...”

“Aizawa’s opinion and mine are the same. Do you remember doing something bad to boyfriend-san?”

I ask the girl with the gyaru-like appearance, she answers in a bothersome way.

“A—, I had an affair recently, I think? But seriously, I only did that much, I don’t understand why he is cheating?”

Seriously, what is this bitch saying?

Disregarding the dumbfounded me and Aizawa, Shinonome puts on a scary smile.

“First, I think you should come to be able to understand the feeling of the other party
——Next”

“I send love letters many times! But the other party hasn’t answered even once!”

“*Etto*...this is just my intuition, but she’s not a girl in our school, right?”

“*E*? Of course, because it’s the energetic idol on TV, Shimura Yukari”

To the third-year boy with otaku-like way of speaking, Aizawa understates while having a forced smile.

“*Ano*, that, rather than love letter, it’s just sending fan letter, isn’t it...”

“W, what!? Are you saying that the letters I sent are not filled with my feelings!?”

“*I, iya*, it’s not like that...”

While Aizawa is taken back, Shinonome finishes off with a whole face smile.

“It’s recommended to love someone suitable to your stature...next”

“My face is bad so I’m never popular. You guys, please become my girlfriend!”

“*Kyaa*, don’t touch me!”

Being touched by the hand of a third-year male student, the androphobic Aizawa becomes frightened and clings to me.

“W, what’s this rudeness! Isn’t the literature club the place where any wishes would be granted?”

Seemingly angry about making a move on Aizawa, Shinonome is having a smile while her cheeks are twitching.

“We are not spirits of the lamp. And, before blaming your face for your unpopularity,

firstly, how about polishing your inner self as a human being?”

Such exchanges repeat dozens of times――

Today, we finished dealing with everything somehow.

“Haa...It’s finally over. Rather, still the amount of consultations about love is numerous, isn’t it...”

While being buried among the backrests in the middle of the sofa, I sigh deeply.

“Maa, when I worked in student council’s consultation office, almost all the matters were about that subject too. Speaking about adolescent students’ consultations, the first thing we can expect is always that”

In a tiring state, Shinonome murmurs while drinking the black tea I made.

“As expected, it’s impossible if I’m alone... If Ibuki or Ikuno aren’t there for me, perhaps men’s consultations would become too scary to listen...uh, like the person approaching forcibly like today, I think”

Even if you don’t have androphobia, that will still be scary.

“It’s fine, Aizawa. Usually, I think me or Shinonome will be there too, so don’t worry”

But then, while Shinonome is drinking black tea elegantly.

“Together with me is okay, but it is dangerous if Aizawa-san is together with Ikuno-kun”

“E, Ibuki...why it’s dangerous if I’m together with Ikuno?”

The pure Aizawa understands nothing, looking in puzzlement.

Shinonome, staring at me with her side glance, smiles.

“Because this morning, Ikuno-kun was looking at Kamenno-senpai’s big breasts with indecent eyes. Because Aizawa-san has big breasts too, when you are alone together,

won't he do ecchi things to you, I wonder?"

"E, Ikuno...to me?"

The next-door Aizawa glances at me, I understand that her body is stiffened maybe because she's a little nervous.

Kuu, Shinonome talked about unnecessary things and she becomes cautious, doesn't she...?

Somehow, I hold a sense of impatience in my heart.

However, Aizawa who is blushing and looking downward, says.

"S, such a thing, Ikuno won't do it...because, he's not ecchi...probably"

Ugu...Being told like that, my heart hurts for some reason.

But, Aizawa seems to trust me considerably as a man.

In order not to betray Aizawa's feeling, I must work hard to behave like a sage.

"It's worth seeing when your mask comes off, right? Ikuno-kun"

"I, I'm not detestable like what Shinonome thought"

Then, when Aizawa is not watching, Shinonome quietly leans in close to me and whispers to my ear.

"I wonder. Do you really not want to do it? Ecchi things to a girl..."

"!?"

To tempt me, Shinonome holds the edge of her Pilates skirt and raise it.

The inside is too dark to see.

This fellow Shinonome, she's completely teasing me.

Seeing me in panic state, she smiles happily.

“...O, oi, Aizawa is nearby so stop it”

Being warned in a low voice, Shinonome who seems to be already satisfied backs away and drinks black tea coolly.

Meanwhile, the blush of Aizawa’s face has faded considerably.

To gloss over this awkward atmosphere, Aizawa smiles feebly while touching her hairdo.

“Other than that, the consultants come suddenly, to the point that although it is the second day, the number has doubled, doesn’t it? Perhaps, there will be much more tomorrow...”

“Haha, please pardon me. But with the current impression, what Aizawa said would become true, it’s scary”

If the consultants continue to increase as it is, the literature club’s activities will become impossible.

I can’t enjoy my hobby if that happens.

In other words, the necessity of having this place is lost. *(there’s no reason to have the room, when he doesn’t have time to do his stuff)*

We avoided the club-abolishment crisis with much effort and yet, so unreasonable.

But, I feel like it will continue to increase as it is.

“Just my thought but this too is surely because of the meeting last week, right? Because Ikuno and Ibuki saved me there, I think everyone has acknowledged you two. The current situation is surely difficult, but when I think you two are recognized, I’m very happy♪”

Aizawa is happy like it’s her own thing.

While I smile wryly,

“I think the one who is recognized more is Shinonome”

The consultants increased suddenly from yesterday, maybe it was really a result of the meeting last week as Aizawa said.

There is no reason other than that.

However, I feel like forgetting something important.

At that time, the neighboring Shinonome suddenly stands up.

Holding the teacup and saucer, while letting her graceful, lustrous jet black hair flutter, she sits down on the opposite sofa with a refined demeanor.

“The reason we become busy, do you two really think that it’s really caused by the meeting?”

Closing her eyes, with the usual calm expression as if having confidence somewhere, Shinonome asks.

“Ibuki...What do you mean?”

Aizawa speaks for the voice of my heart.

Shinonome, with an expression just like a kind goddess’s,

“Consultants suddenly increased, it’s not because of the recognition from the meeting last week”

“...Wait, Shinonome. You mean there is a reason other than that?”

She nods, puts the cup on the table and raises her index finger to announce.

“In other words, what I want to say is that this busyness must be a thing contrived by someone”

Being struck out of the blue, I and Aizawa are at loss for words.

Shinonome, seeing our reaction, complements.

“Maa, strictly speaking, the meeting last week is unrelated. Because, just maybe, I think it become the starting point, leading to the matter happening lately”

“...it was planned? Then someone saw the meeting last week, and want us to suffer?”

Aizawa seemed to think about the same thing as mine too.

“The present time is also when everyone is busy preparing for the school festival, such thinking is reasonable. But, I couldn’t say so about this stage”

Saying with a worried look on her face, from her pocket, Shinonome slowly takes out a piece of pager.

“You two seemed to forget because of the continued busyness from yesterday, but do you remember this letter, I wonder?”

A———though I do think that I’m forgetting something.

That’s right, I finally remember.

“That letter...If I’m not mistaken, after school on Monday, it was stuck in the literature club’s doors, wasn’t it?”

But, given the subject, we thought it was a prank and let it flow.

However, this happens, and we understand the importance of the subject.

Shinonome unfolds the paper, and begins to read its contents.

“[Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of the Literature club.

Though it’s sudden, right now I (*boku* – normally used by male, but this case it’s in *katakana* instead of normal *kanji*) have fallen into a very difficult situation.

Therefore, I think of wanting you (*kimitachi* – plural, often used when talking to *juniors*), who played an active part in the meeting a few days ago, to settle.

But unfortunately, I did not completely trust you.

Therefore. Firstly, I intend to give a few trials to test your ability.

In case you succeed, at that time I intend to show up before you and make my request.

Well then, do you best.

Your sincerely]"

When Shinonome finished reading, she folded the letter neatly and put it on the desk.

"The trials, I think it's probably about what is happening these two days. Besides, the subject, it's not definitely saying about wanting us to suffer. According to the writing, I can only think this is merely to test our so-called potentiality. But anyway, it's undoubtable that this person is the culprit causing the recent disturbance"

Aizawa puts her finger on her lips and says.

"This letter, was sent on Monday, two days ago, wasn't it? Because we became busy from the following day which was Tuesday, then as expected, the sender of this letter is suspicious, right...?"

"Yes, it's like that. In case in the meeting on Wednesday last week, the literature club became a place where many people can rely on, then from that day, or the following Thursday, we were supposed to be busy. But the number of consultant suddenly increase from yesterday, it must be the work of this letter's sender"

I assent after listening to Shinonome's speech.

"Then, if we identify this letter's sender, we can say goodbye to the current busy days, is what you mean?"

"Ikuno-kun is right. But, in the current stage, because we don't have even one information of the culprit, it would be difficult to search for that person"

"E, why? At least, we know that it's a male student, isn't it?"

The writing style too is that of a man, and only a student can use the consultation office like that.

But Shinonome shakes her head.

“This letter, the opening greeting and season’s greeting, even the leading words are nonexistence, only the concluding sentence is written while pretending to not know the basic configuration of a letter. I thought we could decide that it was written by a student as first, but an adult understanding fundamental things purposely doing such a thing, that possibility is undeniable...Besides, the subject [*Boku*] makes us believe that it’s a man, but the concluding sentence is what women use [*Kashiko*] (*your sincerely*). Also, please look at this——”

Shinonome once again opens the letter and shows the blank backside.

Some letters written there.

Because until today, the one who was managing the letter was Shinonome, this is the first time I and Aizawa see it.

While Aizawa looks puzzled with a complicated face, she reads the letters written in hiragana and katakana aloud.

“[Hanikamu Iyo]...?” (*はにかむイヨ* ヱ, *hanikamu* = *shy/bashful*)

“[Smiling Iyo] it means, maybe? E, but Iyo is a woman’s name isn’t it?

However, isn’t the first person pronoun [*Boku*] strange?”

Perhaps, this must be the name of the sender because when I ask, Shinonome quietly nods deeply.

“In other words, conflicting information is put together in order to make us unable to know the culprit’s age and gender.

Obviously the culprit confuses us and enjoys it by not providing any information”

I see.

So that’s why it’s [Hanikamu Iyo]...?

In brief, if one were to speak of what kind of thing did this letter’s contents show.

“As if we are unable to grasp the tail, forcing us into a situation where we have no choice but to accept the trials” (*an idiom: discover crucial information, can also mean*

that knowing one's weakness)

As long as the culprit's identity wasn't found, following it and catching are impossible.

Dealing with the trials and waiting for the culprit is the only way, that's what it means.

"...Something like that, it's slightly unfair"

Aizawa who understood the other party's intention murmurs with a grim face.

Because Aizawa has an honest personality, it seems like she's unable to forgive such an unfair move.

"I understand Aizawa-san's angry feeling. But let's look at the pluses. If we finish the trials and the culprit appears, it means we will be freed from this busyness" (*plus = positive side*)

"A, is that so...that's right, Ibuki♪"

With Shinonome's tenderly soothing, the forward-looking Aizawa changes immediately and shows a bright expression.

It was good. For the time being, if I endure until that time, I can thoroughly enjoy my hobby in the clubroom again.

And, the two important members won't feel busy and will be at ease.

But, with that purpose, surely――

"?...ufufu"

The super-troublesome neat-type bitch who I antagonize, her strength will become essential...

Nonetheless, I vow in my heart to do my best without depending on Shinonome as much as possible.

After all, the president of the literature club is me. I cannot leave it to another person.

And, thinking about the number of consultants increasing even more the next day, I

will be surprised.

CHAPTER 2

THE CAT CASE

(CONSULTATION'S DIFFICULTY: I)

"Ku, Kuso...Why did this happen?"

After school of the next day.

Sitting on the sofa in the clubroom, I was hugging Shinonome's hip while she was on my knees.

"Please do not move. The tea would spill, and I couldn't read the book, don't you agree?"

Shinonome, who is reading a book while holding a teacup on one hand, while turning her back on me, she leaks out a happy voice

"Ano...it will be fine if you don't do something like reading while using a person instead of a chair, won't it..."

Nonetheless, because Shinonome's slim and soft buttocks transmitted a gentle warmth and softness through her skirt, it was me who was enjoying this side benefit-like situation a little.

"Be quiet. Listening to my request is your job. Because the club will disappear if I quit, hold your master more tightly in order not to let her fall"

Ku...although this situation will create various misunderstandings if another person sees it, I couldn't say anything after being told like that. Although I don't know what part of this is fine, for now let's properly do what Shinonome said.

This fellow Shinonome, from now on I'm sure that she will threaten me by asking such kinds of requests...

I think about the future and sigh, say while desperately trying not to move.



“Other than that, Shinonome, the meeting with Aizawa’s sewing group, would it be okay if you didn’t participate?”

patan I hear the sound of closing book, and Shinonome’s clear voice hits my earlobe.

“No problem. The sample of maid uniform was completed. It’s a detailed meeting with Aizawa who is the group leader as the center. There wasn’t any meaning even if I was there——”

By the way, I work behind the scene on appointed days. Until the school festival, the time block for the last class become time for preparation, there’s no need to work after school, it’s possible to go to the clubroom immediately like this.

“Besides, Ikuno can’t do it alone. Because the literature club recently is busy everyday”

Hearing the words spoken to me the moment I turned back, “E?” I opened my eyes wide in astonishment.

What? This fellow Shinonome, did she worry about me? Even just a little, she’s good.

——It’s a great mistake if I think of such a thing.

“*Fun*. Raising your favorable impression degree like this, and eventually making me yours, is your scheme, isn’t it?”

“*Ara*, you know me well, don’t you? *Doutei-san* who is enjoying my cute butts with all his power” (*Doutei* = *virgin*, usually refer to a man)

“How can you perfectly read my thought!?”

“*Ufufu*, is it telepathy, I wonder?”

When she retorts (*tsukkomu*) with all her power, she smiles cheerfully as if being with me with her natural self is pleasant.

“*Maa*, anyhow, half is true. Yesterday’s amount was handled by three people but it was hard. To be honest, I’m worry about Ikuno-kun being alone”

“*U*, What, suddenly...”

“What” you ask? It’s my real intention. You will become my thing in the future. Understanding that my cute pet is suffering, there’s no way I, the owner, can abandon it, don’t you think so?”

This fellow Shinonome, saying things like making me her slave pet but such things is just a side. I mean, she will cherish instead of putting me aside, or even take responsibility and take care of my troubles

But, it’s as if——

“Oi Shinonome, perhaps, you want me...as a b, boyfriend?”

“..”

I understood that Shinonome’s body stiffened slightly.

“...Ara, an insect sticking to your hand”

Gyuuu~~~~!

“Itai itai itai itai itai itai!” (it hurts x 6)

The left hand which is near my hip pinch me with all its strength. But because Shinonome is sitting on me, I cannot move without thinking. This, this is seriously a torture, isn’t it...!?

Shinonome finally stops pinching, she picks up the cup and put it to her mouth, looking demure.

“Ku...uu...what did you suddenly do?”

“It’s your bad because you said something weird. A partner is unnecessary for me. I only want a pet, please don’t misunderstand”

This fellow, as expected, she seems to see me as a pet only.

“...Rather, move aside Shinonome. This situation, it is bad if someone sees it, right?”

She looks back, smiles thinly and stares at me.

“It’s still fine in particular. The consultants do not come here at all today, for some reason”

“W, why they don’t come today? Although in two days until yesterday, many had come...”

“Well, perhaps, the trial was finished yesterday, maybe?”

“E, then...by that you mean the culprit will come soon?”

It was written in the letter that if we cleared the trials, the culprit would personally appear and make a request.

“Well. That possibility is zero——”

Shinonome who sees me acting as she expects is in a good mood. But at that time, suddenly the club’s door is opened, Shinonome’s smiling face becomes frozen.

“Nice to meet you...tte, what...are you doing?”

The schoolgirl who came, we have been seen completely by her.

Wai...this situation, what is our excuse, Shinonome!?

This fellow is an ojousama of a famous conglomerate, on top of that she’s also this school’s board chairman representative. That Shinonome and someone like me wrapping up cozily together in a clubroom, if a rumor like that spreads out, as one would expect, her position within the school will...!

Shinonome is a bitch but she’s also an important member. Therefore, I’m getting impatient as if it’s my own thing, a thought like the schoolgirl before my eyes may be the culprit can’t reach my mind

“A consultant, aren’t you?”

Then Shinonome shows an unexpectedly calm response, comes down from me and stands up.

Don’t tell me, this fellow Shinonome, she intends to pretend that you haven’t been seen yet?

But, my thought was naive.

“Ano...That figure just now...what is that?”

“Aa, please don’t worry about it. He’s this club’s president, but he has a fetish of doing ecchi things to the female members he hates. I’m troubled very much too...”

That’s right! I have such a fetish——tte hey!!

I shout in my mind. But, I was too late.

“Uwaa...”

She was moving away from me. She has the eyes completely similar to when one is looking at the filth.

She’s a docile girl with evenly-cut forelock, wearing a long skirt. A girl whose outfit is like she’s living in the library, even if it’s not possible to say she’s a beautiful girl, she’s still hiding the refinement of Yamato Nadeshiko (*a woman who displays the feminine virtues of old Japan*)

Ku, I suppose it’s time to consult from now. I wonder what kind of face I should make when talking to this person.

I’m sure that this person doesn’t want to consult to a pervert too.

Although thinking like that is depressing, I stand up somehow.

“About the consultation, I should give up”

Guwa!/? (*like coughing sound*)

My heart is gorged out by a few unintentional words and I end up falling down.

“Please don’t worry about that. Because I’m responsible for giving advices”
“Shinonome-san, isn’t it?...If it’s you then it’s fine, I guess”

Causing my position to fall while protecting hers, Shinonome easily invite the girl to go inside.

Really, Shinonome is truly a terrible woman...

While staring at Shinonome with half-open eyes as if cursing her, I sit down on the sofa.

“Want us to examine your pet cat’s illness?”

Listening to the girl’s consult, I’m a little surprised at the unexpected subject.

“U, un”

The third year student who is called Amami nods while being cautious of me.

“But, wanting us to examine your cat...If that’s the case then isn’t it better to examine in a veterinary hospital?”

Then Shinonome who sits next to me interjects.

“There are situations when it’s unable to take it to the hospital, aren’t there?”

Amami-san shows her assent, and slowly talks.

“Our cat, Clair. In the past, when its health was bad it was put in a cage and is carried to the hospital, but at that time it was afraid of injection and struggled, since then, it seemed to become scared of the hospital. Therefore this time, it groaned awfully when seeing the transporting cage, and we could not take it to the hospital. We tried to put it in the cage forcibly, or held it by hand and carried it to the hospital, but it seemed to understand that it was taken to the hospital, and struggled although it was considerably weakened...this situation”

Both hands Amami-senpai held out, were full of bandages Perhaps she was scratched.

I see, because of that, she asks the literature club...

But as a matter of course, Shinonome replies while looking sorry.

“Amami-senpai, I think maybe you already knew but...we are just students, and don’t happen to have medical knowledge. Therefore, I’m sorry but we don’t have enough

strength to be given this request”

I guess so. Even if it's Shinonome, she's not omnipotent.

Amami-san looks downward, her eyes become a little teary.

“Of course, I understand that. But, there's no one nearby that I can rely on...none of the veterinary hospital nearby have house call doctor, as it is then Clair will...”

I and Shinonome looks at each other with troubled face.

“I, because I lost my grandmother last year, my important family, I don't want to lose it anymore. Besides, it's too soon for Clair to die. It was still lively until yesterday's evening,

but at night, for some reason it was in a state of breathing faintly...therefore, please, help me”

With tearful voice, she lowers her head, as one would expect, I want to do something for her. Besides, in my case, my parents were often away from home because of their jobs, I can somehow understand the bitterness of not having one's family.

“Shinonome, can't we do anything?”

“...that's true”

Shinonome's heart seems to be moved by Amami-senpai's desperate situation too, she says after thinking for a while. “Perhaps, I think we can't become doctors' substitution. However, if it's about the method of putting the cat into the cage, perhaps we can think of something”

“Then, you will help?”

“*Hai*, but only within what we can”

Shinonome smiles reservedly, and Amami-senpai wipes her eyes.

“...a, *arigatou*. Becoming doctors' substitution is impossible, but if it's about that aspect then surely you can help me, isn't it? I, even in my head, couldn't think that far...as expected, being recommended to ask the literature club was a good idea”

Being recommended?

It's conceivable from that remark that someone tempted her to go to this place.

In this situation, this case is one of the trials, it turns out that she's not the sender of the letter

"Shinonome, wait"

She brings her delightful face near mine when I beckon her.

"What, I wonder?"

.....Your face, isn't it a little too close?

Amami-senpai, who also thinks so, seems to be uncomfortable so I quickly tell her about the matter.

"Amami-senpai, she knows the letter's sender, doesn't she?"

"Yes, I thought so too. The consultants mysteriously decreased rapidly after a while, and Amami-senpai visiting after being recommended by someone. I don't think it's coincidental. Perhaps, this is a trial prepared by the letter's sender"

"Then, If we ask for the name of person recommended her, we may find out the letter's sender?"

"I wonder, but probably, I think it's impossible"

"E, why?"

"About that, actually If you ask and see, you will understand, maybe?"

Being told like that by Shinonome who seems to already notice something, I ask.

"Ano, Amami-senpai, if it's fine, the name of the person who recommended you to consult at the literature club, can you tell us?"

"E...t, that"

What!? She seems to feel extremely shaken.

“Gomenasai. Telling you is not possible, I think...because it’s a promise”

A promise?

I look at Shinonome’s direction, she smiles as if wanting to say “Told you”, and brings her face close.

“In other words, the person who recommended her this place had predicted that his/her name would be asked, and asked her not to speak —because right now, it will be troublesome if the name is known by us”

If it’s only recommendation in general, no one will do such a thing.

There is only one person who will be in trouble if the name is known by us right now, I understand (his/her) solution.

“If the name is identified in this stage of trial, it will be difficult for the sender to appear. Then, because it’s troublesome if our ability is not tested, she was asked not to speak...

Then, the one recommended Amami-senpai here is the letter’s sender [Hanikamu Iyo], and this case is a trial, is that right?”

“It can be said so”

Then, we can’t decline anymore. I arrange everything in my head and straighten myself.

“Amami-senpai, since this seems to be an urgent case, we should quickly make various trials and errors at the actual scene. Although I think that we, the literature club should visit your house, is it okay?”

Shinonome seems to agree to my opinion too, and quietly listens next to me.

“E, you coming to my house?”

She seems to really hate it... Though because I was considered a pervert because of Shinonome, it can’t be helped.

At that moment, the clubroom door is vigorously opened and someone enters.

“Haa, haa...sorry, you two...I was, late”

It's Aizawa who is putting both hands on her knees while breathing with her whole, slender body. Big drops of sweat are streaming down her white forehead and cleavage. Did she think there would be many consultants today too and hurriedly came over?

Truly, Aizawa who thinks about other people and can act accordingly is a good girl.

“Don't worry Aizawa. Because today's consultant is only Amami-senpai here alone”

“...E? No way...Why today...so few?”

The surprised Aizawa puts her hand on her chest and adjust her breath, from the bag she takes out a handkerchief to wipe the sweat on her forehead.

“Aizawa-san, the circumstance will be explained later. Other than that, I'm sorry for the suddenness, but from now it has been decided that we would visit the consultant — Amami-senpai's house”

Shinonome explained the situation and this time's consultation's contents.

“——I see, it's *neko-chan*...then, we must hurry” (*neko = cat, i guess everyone knows that*)

Aizawa looks serious——but she suddenly seems to be curious about the surrounding scent, **kunkun** she begins to sniff. (*sfx: sniff-sniff*)

“Aizawa, what happened?”

“...iya, somehow, there is a delicious smell similar to a cake's, I think? **sunsun**” (not sure, but it seems to be another onomatopoeia for the act of smell)

And then, Amami-senpai whose cheeks are dyed red awkwardly says “Ano”

“My house, is a cake shop called [Garnir] in front of the station. Perhaps, I think that's the cause”

Hee, Aizawa has such a wonderful sense of smell? I didn't notice such a thing.

“Aizawa-san, it’s amazing. It’s totally like a dog, isn’t it?”

“E? Dog...!? *M, mou* Ibuki! Don’t put me together with a dog”

Aizawa always smiles but she will get mad when she’s angry. With a red face, she stared at the gentle Shinonome.

However, the innocent girl immediately changes her expression.

“A, other than that, Amami-senpai. I, often go to eat cake at Garnir! The food there is really delicious, among the cake shops I know, it’s my most favorite♪”

That reminds me, Aizawa, yesterday you talked about your favorite cake shop in front of the station, didn’t you?

Was that place Amami-senpai’s house?

“...being told something that much, I’m happy...I think”

While looking downward shyly, “Then” Amami-senpai says.

“If you can bring Clair to the hospital safely, I will treat you three cakes as my gratitude” The sweet-loving Aizawa has brilliant smile similar to a blooming flower.

“For real!? A, it’s wrong...I, will try my best for *neko-chan*’s sake!!”

Aizawa’s tensely serious face, seems like her feeling of wanting to help the cat is real.

Holding her bag, Shinonome leaves her seat.

“Well then, because the discussion seemed to be settled, let’s go”

According to the story, Clair seems to have weakened.



Walking about 10 minutes from Urotan high school, we arrive at the cake cafe [Garnir]

Garnir, a shop which is run along the wide national highway in front of the station, several tables and chairs was prepared in the house frontage so that a tea party can

be held outside , sitting there is a student couple chatting peacefully and eating cake during the pause.

Riajuu?...although it's so hot like this, they still intend to flirt outside like that?

Amami-senpai seems to think so too, she glances at these two with a complicated face and enters the shop. Together with Aizawa and Shinonome who don't show the look of caring so much, I went to the shop's interior.

“Haa...I'm revived～～♪”

As soon as we entered the air-conditioned shop, **hatahata** Aizawa fans her chests.
(sfx: soft flutter sound of cloth moving in the wind)

Uwa, it's shaking amazingly.

2 big swellings fighting each other, because they are shaking, moving up and down, my eyes are instinctively attracted.

“いっ!?”

At that time, someone pinched my unguarded butts and a sharp pain ran through my body

“Ara, what part of Aizawa-san are you looking at, I wonder, Ikuno-kun?”

Shinonome became scarier as she smiled.

“I, I don't see anything in particular”

Fortunately, Aizawa doesn't notice, with the same loose expression she continues to fan her chests.

“O, other than that Shinonome, *hora*...Amami-senpai is looking”

Having finished talking to the person who seems to be her mother in the counter, Amami-senpai beckoned us.

Close to my ear, Shinonome's whisper is so cold that my skin are getting goosebumps.

“Don’t become deredere too much to other girls in front of me who will become your master——okay?”

“U, understood. So, let’s go——”

As usual, this fellow Shinonome shows a great desire to monopolize me... Rather, the words just now, if it’s in gal game, they will be the words a character having goodwill speaks to the protagonist. *Maa*, in Shinonome’s case, she only wants me as a pet, something like love is impossible.

I call out to Aizawa too, after doing some light greetings to the mother-like person, the three of us went through the door inside the counter. That place is connected to her house, we follow Amami-senpai, take off our footwear on the earthen floor and begin to walk in the white, wooden flooring corridor shined by electric lights along its width.

“U—n, this smell, what is it?”

Then Aizawa, whose concentration is focused in her nose, begins to sniff the surrounding’s smell.

“Smell? Aizawa, This sweet smell you feel, isn’t it the smell of cakes drifting from the shop?”

“It is true but, I mean, something is subtly different——”

And, she comes to the last room of the place where Amami-senpai turned a moment ago.

“A, it’s from around this area, maybe”

She begins to sniff the smell again in front of the closed door. Shinonome immediately imitated with a broad smile.

“Aizawa-san, I don’t smell anything...”

“E, seriously? U—n...then, maybe that too is my imagination”

When Aizawa returns while scratching her head and laughing, Amami-senpai comes back.

“Ano, I’d say just in case, please don’t enter that room. Because it’s the room of my grandma who passed away last year... Everyone in my family, still cannot settle our hearts yet so the room is left without changes”

“A, there is a brand-new sliding lock, because you don’t want anyone to enter, right?”
Listened to Aizawa’s words, I think.

Because it seems like her family won’t enter, won’t a simple lock for the time when people from the outside came fine?

Iya, but if it’s the case then it’s pointless to type of things that can open it easily, isn’t it?

Shinonome reply as if she already sensed my question.

“Ikuno-kun, please look here”

Where Shinonome pointed is the lower left of the door. Things like bruises from scratching can be seen innumerably there.

“A, perhaps, this lock is a thing to prevent *neko-chan* from entering?”

Aizawa who saw the bruises on the door asks, Amami-senpai nods.

“...Because Clair likes grandma very much, even after grandma passed away, it tried to enter this room, where it loved, many times. So we installed a lock there, maybe it’s just a feeling”

“Clair-chan, hasn’t known that grandma already passed away yet...”

Surely, it believes that it will meet grandma now if it goes to this room, right?

All of us in literature club think about Clair’s feelings and our expressions become gloomy.

Amami-senpai. while feeling awkward about that, says “This way” and guide us to the cat’s place.

“—I see. Surely, it becomes weakened”

Being leaded to the living room, we are now confirming the black cat which lies down on the sofa – Clair’s condition.

“Clair-chan, this is absolutely not a common cold...because it stretches its limbs in a completely exhausted state, and uses its whole body to breath painfully. Unless we quickly do something...”

I understand the feeling of Aizawa who is getting impatient, and also consent to Amami-senpai who clung to the straw and relied on the literature club. Clair’s condition, that alone seemed like a race again time.

I stare at Clair,

“As expected, if it is weakened this much, I could put it in a cage, if it’s still impossible then I could bring it along by holding it in the arms...Amami-senpai, can I try a bit?”

“Un...but perhaps, I think it’s still impossible”

Amami-senpai brings the cage for carrying purpose next to me, and leaves the door in the opened state. At that time, Clair already reacts, heavily raises its neck and glares at us feebly.

“*Hora*, Clair...it’s not scary so come here”

I kindly say and slowly approach. But——

“uuuuu ~~~”

It’s hard to believe that until a while ago, it was in weakened condition, despite looking languid it lets out a low growl and bares its fangs. But I’m not falter and reduces our distance, but.

“Shaaaaa!!”

Soon I receive a vigorous “I’m about to jump” intimidation. With this, approaching is impossible. As expected, I became nervous, and withdrew to behind. Shinonome smiles and says.

“Ikuno-kun, you backed out”

“B, because it can’t be helped, isn’t it? Surely I would be bitten I came like that”

Looking at Clair, despite breathing tiredly with its whole body, it’s still glaring at me.

“Un, the thing just now is as expected...because doing it normally already seemed impossible, let’s think of a different method”

Following the suggestion of the straight-forward Aizawa, I try to think of some alternative plans.

“Because it would act violently when it was hold and taken to the hospital...then we have no choice but to somehow put it in the cage — a, how about trying to put its favorite food inside the cage?”

“We already tried that”

Amami-senpai informs us by muttering these words. Aizawa then suggests.

“A, then! How about putting something to disguise the cage!?”

“We did it too, I think”

“Uu.....I see”

Again, the two of us try to submit a few plans, but Amami-senpai already tried them all.

That’s right. Amami-senpai had tried her best but in the end, because she was unable to do so, she relied on the literature club. There’s no way a solution can be found that easily.

But while doing this, Clair’s breathing become short, its physical condition also worsen. So I try the method of forcibly holding Clair and putting it in the cage. And the result —

“Ikuno, are you all right?”

“hurt...un...somehow...ha, hahaha”

“It’s not a laughing matter. I’m seriously worry”

Glaring at me with a slightly angry look, Aizawa takes out a band-aid from the first-aid kit Amami-senpai prepared.

“It will be serious if the bacteria enter from the mouth of the wound. Hora, I will stick the band-aid to the place you was scratched, so don’t move for a bit”

“*U, un*”

Aizawa’s lovely face immediately approaches until it’s right before my eyes. Her skin, which has thin makeup, is so white that it seems to be transparent, her widely opened eyes are big and the eyelashes are long. She’s a cute and kind girl, if my trauma to beautiful girls didn’t exist, I must have confessed, even immediately. I was attracted to the extend of thinking of such a thing.

Then, having noticed that I forgot the existence of Shinonome, I timidly peek at her state.”...”

But, Shinonome seems to think of something and didn’t look this way.

Showing her consent as if having gathered her though, she open her mouth.

“Amami-senpai. I thought about other methods to carry it, but in the first place, because approaching is already hard, I think it’s impossible. So once again, let’s try seeing this case from a different point of view. Perhaps a hint can be found”

Amami-senpai seems to agree with that thought as she nods.

“Firstly, is it fine to hear the detailed story until Clair became like this?”

“*Un.....etto*, I think I already spoke about it but yesterday, from when I went to the evening class to when I came back,

Clair was fine. But at night, suddenly it felt sick and this happened”

“By the way, when did you usually give it dinner?”

“It’s always about 7pm. Approximately before Clair felt sick yesterday... A, but we didn’t give it something strange. Because Clair only eats standard cat food, and my

family don't give it anything else. That's why, maybe, I think the food isn't the cause"

"...Is that so?"

Shinonome puts her hand on her chin, ponders more deeply.

I'm the club president so I didn't want to leave it to Shinonome alone.

For this reason, I earnestly think about a breakthrough solution. But, there aren't any good methods coming to my mind.

Kuso, if we don't solve this case then the literature club which is busy until now can't regain its peace.

Besides, Clair is still like this...

Shinonome and Aizawa don't seem to see the clue to the solution, as they don't say anything at all.

The only thing that pass idly is the time, and Clair's breathing becomes heavier.

Amami-senpai is unable to remain indifferent to such a state and says.

"Should we take a break, just a little? I will bring out the tea...sorry, I was untactful"

Her important pet is in a dangerous state. It was natural to forget about the small details. *(as far as I know, serving tea to people when they come to one's house is a basic etiquette and she haven't done that yet)*

We sit in a circle at the table nearby and have the barley tea Amami-senpai prepared.

"*Ano*, Amami-senpai...it's not the situation for us to slowly drink tea like this and yet...really, sorry"

"*U, uun*. It's fine, really. That, I put too many roots in there, but it can't be helped"

"...I'm the representative of the consultation office and yet, sorry. I'm totally unhelpful"

"Ikuno..."

I who couldn't help even a cat was too pathetic.

In the end, right now I have to rely on Shinonome who is desperately thinking nearby.

"S, stop. You don't need to lower your head to me...a, other than that"

Amami-senpai changes the topic in panic.

"Aizawa-san, isn't it? In the last meeting, you...was the victim"

"E? A, *hai*...that's right"

Being thought as a prostitution — as if remembered that, Aizawa looks downward and blushes.

"Amami-senpai, Aizawa is really, truly don't do such a thing——"

"A, it's different, not like that...but, that...from the rumors, I heard that you had experience in keeping company with many men, is that the truth?"

Oh, so it's about that huh? Of course, that too is wrong.

Aizawa, who was deeply moved just by holding my hand in the date a few days ago, is a girl with 0 experience in keeping company with men

"I, don't prostitute but I surely have many experience with men.....now, I'm...in a relationship with the club president Ikuno-kun"

"E!?"

I'm confused for an instant. But Shinonome who knows the situation lets out a chuckle and continue to drink barley tea.

...I, I see. Aizawa said she didn't want to lie to me, Shinonome and her gyaru friends in class anymore so she would turn the lie into the truth by having a date with me again. Because she seemed to talk about the circumstances to Shinonome a few days ago, Shinonome ignores the remark a while ago.

"Is, that so...? A, but because you had plenty of experience like that, you can keep company with a peculiar person like the club president...that must be it"

“Ikuno, a peculiar person?”

“Un. Because, *hora*...he must have done that to Aizawa-san too, right? Ecchi play in the club room”

“Ha!?” (*huh*)

Aizawa, after shouting and blushing, instantly brings her grim face close to me while glaring.

“Ikuno! What is Amami-senpai talking about!?”

“I, *iya*! I’m not but because Shinonome...!”

“Ibuki? *tte*, Ibuki won’t say such a thing!”

Aizawa trusts her important friend completely from the bottom of her heart. Really, so pure that I want to cry.

“Aizawa-san, there is a deep circumstance for that. Don’t criticize Ikuno-kun too much”

“Is that so?”

Shinonome nods. Although it looks like Aizawa doesn’t understand, she looks downward and blushes.

“...I don’t understand anything, but if Ibuki says so”

“*Gomen*, Aizawa. There really are various reasons”

Rather, it’s because of Shinonome!

“Un, it’s fine already. Because there seems to be some kind of circumstances”

After glancing at me, Aizawa who feels like sulking turns away.

Being outside of the mosquito net is not fun, I think? (*蚊帳の外* *an idiom, which mean being left out of an event/being treated as an outsider*)

“Isn’t it good? ...you two, boyfriend and girlfriend being close”

Amami-senpai says with a feeble smile, Aizawa's cheeks change its color as she looks downward embarrassedly.

"M, me and Ikuno, are not...we only held hands recently, we haven't gone as far as being close..."

"*Hee*, held hand"

In front of the fidgeting Aizawa, Shinonome has a cold smile and stares at me.

Don't look. Because it's for Aizawa's request, it can't be helped, right?

Then Amami-senpai suddenly talks in a sorrowful voice.

"*Haa*.....I'm not lucky, in things like that. Because grandma passed away last year, and now Clair becomes like this...and I'm in a quarrel with my boyfriend too. Why are they all like that?"

Amami-senpai has a boyfriend? It seemed to be unexpected as Aizawa and Shinonome are surprised, too.

Listening to the story, we are told that boyfriend-san is a kind boyfriend who likes flower and they got to know each other as library members

"Ano, why did you quarrel with boyfriend san?"

The sorry-looking Aizawa asks.

"...Because, in my birthday, he gave me different flower instead of my favorite rose, I think? Although it was truly a trifle, wasn't it? But, a quarrel was triggered by that...I asked what part of me did he like. But, he just felt silent and didn't answer... That's why we are quarreling now. Because the flower I eventually received at that time was grandma's favorite, now it's offered to her altar"

That's why a while ago when she looked at the couple in front of the shop, she made a complicated face.

Then, Shinonome turns the talk back to the main subject.

"Other than that, let's talk about Clair's story. That condition, it's indeed bad if we do

not hurry”

Clair lying on the sofa makes a rough breathing sound like that of a dog, its whole body goes up and down. Its condition is obviously worse than a while ago. But, it is cautious as usual and is still glaring at us.

Shinonome talks quickly.

“The current condition, we don’t have any method to put it in the cage, and we can’t even approach it. Therefore we can’t take Clair to the hospital. Then, the only thing we can do is to investigate the cause by ourselves”

“It’s reckless, but if it’s the only method then it can’t be helped...”

“More or less, I think it’s very likely that it’s food allergy. I heard that your family didn’t give it anything, but it may eat something at places where your eyes can’t reach. For example, if it’s a cat, eating the whole green onion will cause hemolytic anemia, it may become serious illness to the point that blood transfusion is needed. Besides, coffee is dangerous even if only a small amount is licked. Because it can’t decompose theobromine in things like chocolate, that will cause abnormalities in central nerves and heart, the worst case – death – is possible too”

But, Amami-senpai says.

“I think Clair really eats nothing. Because, we run a cake shop, we don’t put the ingredients at places where cat can reach...inside of the house is like that too so, perhaps, I think it’s not”

If it’s not allergy, it’s beyond doubt that we can’t find the cause...

Being told clearly like that by senpai, Shinonome is lost in thought again.

Is it already hopeless...?

Just when I thought so, in this grave atmosphere, only one person – Aizawa who moves around actively has attention drawn to something.

“Sun, sunsun...”

“E...Aizawa, what are you doing?”

“U—n (Hmm), I’m bothered nonetheless...somehow, in the sweet smell of cakes, rather, there’s a particular sweet smell mixed it...”

Because the cat reacts to the smell, you intend to investigate this accident using that?

“W, wait Aizawa-san...what are you doing?”

Being approached suddenly by Aizawa, Shinonome whose body is sniffed blushes, as expected.

“—a, Ibuki smells really good♪ This perfume is from where? tte, wrong...this is a little different”

After sniffing Amami-senpai’s smell too, Aizawa comes to my place.

“Sunsun”

Slightly standing on tiptoe, Aizawa who closed her eyes carefully sniffs the area around my head.

“U—n, it’s not Ikuno...then, how about this place”

I, I was surprised...the posture just now, it was a perfect kiss situation.

While everyone is blushing, only Aizawa has an earnest expression. From the room, she moves to the corridor. Aizawa advances as she is, eventually says “a” and turns back with a bright face.

“It’s this place as expected! There’s no doubt, the sweet smell is from here!”

The place Aizawa pointed out was the room with a lock. Shinonome who heard that murmurs.

“...Cat...Allergy...Sweet smell...Then, perhaps”

Shinonome hurriedly rushes over to Aizawa’s place, I and Amami-senpai who thinks

“Are there something?” and go to that place.

“Aizawa-san, by any chance, isn’t that the flower’s smell, I wonder?”

“E?... ⊃ ... ⊃ ...a, maybe it’s correct”

Shinonome looks back to Amami-senpai.

“Amami-senpai, the altar of grandmother-sama is in this room, isn’t it?” *(just in case, Amami-senpai uses Oba-chan while Shinonome said Obaa-sama)*

“U, un...that’s so”

“By the way, when did you offer the flower received from boyfriend-san to the altar?”

“Yesterday, when I return home from school”

“...The last one. After you offered the flower and left the room, didn’t you forgot to lock it?”

“E, why...asking that...”

Looking at Shinonome who asks about the information she is not supposed to know, Amami-senpai opens her eyes wide.

“It’s related to Clair’s life. This room, can we enter?”

As she was told, Amami-senpai nodded, removed the lock, then we enter the room with Shinonome as the leader.

The door is opened, it’s a zashiki where old tatami mats were spread out. *(a zashiki is a formal Japanese room)*

Inside the room, a solemn altar is standing, as if being buried in the middle of the wall. Shinonome looks at it, murmurs “As expected”, steps towards the altar, then turns back to us who are standing still without knowing the reason.

Inside of the room was filled with the faint smell of incense stick, and the sweet fragrance of flower which calms one’s heart.

“The cause of Clair’s sudden change in physical condition is this”

We can see the white flower arranged in the vases on both sides of the altar which is higher than a sutra-reading desk. Shinonome tries to drain it, and says clearly.

“White lily flower, even its pollen is a deadly poison to cats”

“E, then...because of me, Clair...?”

Senpai covers her mouth and has a surprised expression.

“Only licking the pollen sticking to the body may become fatal without quick treatments. By the way, Clair seems to eat the petal and not the pollen”

Shinonome shows the petals of the white lily on the left side.

“A, only the lily flower there is chipped strangely!”

“Then, Clair eats the petal and becomes like that—tte, if it will die without quick treatments, it will be bad if we cant bring it to the hospital by any cost, right!?”

“Wait Ikuno-kun. Although you want to do it very much, practically, just now, it was impossible, was it? If it was like that, then you will end up getting hurt again”

Does she worry about me? I reply with a strong “isn’t this a place where we can’t give up” gaze.

“But, then...what should we do?”

Senpai stares at Shinonome with her eyes which become red as if clinging to her.

“Please think calmly. Why was Clair trying to enter this room? And, why did it climb to the inside of the altar...isn’t it because it was looking for something?”

“E, Shinonome, isn’t it because Clair thought that grandma was still alive and looked for—”

I open my mouth to talk about a matter-of-course-like answer, but it is interrupted by Amami-senpai’s words.

“Perhaps”

As if suddenly remembered something, she immediately rushed up to the altar.

Then, from the place where the miniature shrine, the mortuary tablet, etc.... are put, she takes out a toy-like small mouse doll with a wire handgrip attached.

The doll, which cotton has popped out as if it was scratched many times by an animal, was quite tattered.

“This, is a memento, which was always used when grandma played with Clair... Then perhaps, Clair often tried to enter the room, was to find this?”

“It’s likely so. But it couldn’t enter for a long time. But yesterday, it accomplished its trespass as senpai forgot to lock the room, and found the thing it wanted in the altar. I think at that time, it was attracted by the smell of the flower earlier and ate it. Because the case of a cat eating while lily’s petal which has a sweet fragrance is a famous story”

Shinonome explains leisurely. But Aizawa says with an impatient tone.

“B, but! Just because we found the thing that Clair-chan had searched for, it doesn’t mean that we can take it to the hospital, does it? If it’s a fatal poison then it will be bad without quick treatments, right?”

“That’s correct, even if treatment was given within 24 hours after digesting the component of lily, the number of “unable to be saved” case is numerous. Therefore, just as Aizawa said, it’s necessary to hurriedly take it to the hospital”

“Then Shinonome, what would we do...?”

It was a shameful talk, but right now Shinonome alone is being relied on. While she slightly smile,

“About that, we will you this. Although it’s sink-or-swim”

The thing Shinonome pointed at was the passed-its-prime, shabby mouse doll.

“Uuuuuu~~~~”

When we approach, the completely exhausted Clair raises its neck seriously, be cautious and groans in low voice.

“It’s no good after all. It seems to be impossible to quickly bring it by force...”

While the slouching Aizawa stares at Clair anxiously, Shinonome says.

“It seems to hate the hospital very much——then, Amami-senpai, please try”
“Understood...”

To compromise near the sofa, Amami-senpai holds the mouse doll with wire handgrip attached.

“Hora, Clair...this is what you searched for all the time, isn’t it?”

And, Clair locks its eyes on the doll. Instantly, as if it was a lie, the groans stopped. Clair cries in a seemingly lonely voice, raises its heavy body for several seconds then falls down. Clair who is **furafura** because of the lily’s poison, walks desperately to that doll. (*sfx: staggering*)

“Amami-senpai, put the doll into the cage”

“Un”

She does as Shinonome said. Clair who finally arrives at the front of the cage stops.

Please, please enter...!

If it doesn’t enter, there’s no doubt that Clair’s physical condition will further deteriorate and it will die.

Everyone wants to save this little life and prays. Such time lasted for a while.

And——

“Myaa...”

Clair cries feebly as if mustering its courage, walks step-by-step to the inside of the cage. Finally, Clair curled up as if protecting its important doll and **peropero** licked it.

“っ...Kure...a” (*Kurea = Clair*)

Amami-senpai who sees that scene can't say anything, she only suppresses her voice and begins to cry.

The nearby Aizawa murmurs “Sorry” and clings to me, she says while looking downward and her shoulders are trembling.

“Clair.....chan, already knew. A long time ago, the grandma whom it always loves,

had passed away. Therefore...the important memory with grandma...always, always...searched....higu....uuuu” (*higu = the hiccup-like sound when someone is crying*)

“Aizawa...”

The sobbing together with the hot things that make my shoulder wet.

I, who is feeling shaken by having a girl clung on me, don't know what's good to do and continue to lend her my shoulder in silence.

I do not know the bitterness of losing an important person yet. But, there is a person who had such an experience besides me. My eyes which are looking at Clair, perhaps they are similar to the eyes I looked at Sharte when she first came to our house. To my ear, Shinonome whispers in a quiet tone.

“Stay by those two's sides. Because I have a car to transport to the hospital prepared anytime”

Faster than my agreement, Shinonome separates from there. I laugh weakly.

It's vexing, but Shinonome who works with resolution at any time is a more reliable existence than a man like me. Shinonome who turned her back stops by the corner of the room.

But the thing she took out from her pocket was not the phone, it was a handkerchief.



Next day's lunch break, in the literature club's clubroom.

"Here, are the cakes as gratitude I promised yesterday. You three, please eat them"

Three of us sitting on the sofa receive the box from Amami-senpai who sits on the opposite side. Aizawa confirmed the contents, her eyes were shining **kirakira* as if looking at jewels.

"Garnir's short cakes ~ ♪ Moreover, 6 of them...what to do, Ibuki, if I eat 2 in 1 days, I will gain weight, right?"

"Aizawa-san. If that's the case then won't it be fine if you distribute and eat tomorrow?"

"E?, A, is that so...I, see. Ehehe, I was careless"

"Haha, Aizawa is truly a sweet tooth"

But because her hip is so thin and slender, I'm honestly surprised.

And then, Amami-senpai lowers her head once again.

"Truly, thank you... If you three weren't there, I don't know what would happen to Clair now. Therefore, thank you very much"

"Ano, I didn't do anything big in particular"

Aizawa waves both hands in front of her chest and laughs awkwardly.

"No, Aizawa-san. Without your hint, I couldn't find the answer. Therefore, I think it's worth being praised thoroughly"

"It's truly as Shinonome says. This time, I'm not helpful in particular"

Kuu...Saying that by myself, I feel bad. But, the not helpful one is true.

The case this time, perhaps even if it was only Shinonome and Aizawa, I'm sure that they would be able to solve it.

Despite being the club president, I who wasn't able to do my best for the literature club can only hang my head.

"*Un*, not at all! Ikuno, you really did your best!"

"Aizawa? *Etto*...it's a little too close"

But without minding, Aizawa puts her face even closer to emphasize.

"After all, your cheeks were full of scratches because you did your best. I properly saw it. Besides, two people here understand it too"

Aizawa diligently looks at my face which is full of bandages.

Being encouraged by the pretty girl who is not a bitch, I feel like being saved.

"Ikuno-kun surely didn't help solving the case directly. But as Aizawa-san says, it's the truth that you risked your life and did your best for Clair. I appreciate that too. Though you didn't help solving the case directly"

A, just now this fellow said that twice!

Shinonome laughs as if mocking me and smooths down her black hair gracefully.

But because this time we were saved thanks to Shinonome, I can't say what I want to say.

"*Ano*, you are certainly a err...pervert, maybe, but you really did your best. Therefore, thank you"

"No, I didn't do anything particularly. hahaha"

Just now, did she say "pervert"?

Nonetheless, she lowered her head deeply to me. Her gratitude must be genuine. (enter) Aizawa, who looked at my current state and smiled cheerfully, says.

"But, it was really nice, right? Clair-chan, seems to recover smoothly"

"U, un...somehow. Because of the conversation "There are numerous "treatment

within 24 hours being too late” cases”, it was a miracle that Clair was saved. The doctor was surprised too”

After that, the four of us got on Shinonome family’s car and quickly brought Clair to the hospital. After explaining the cause, detailed examination was immediately carried out, because the deterioration of elbow function was found, artificial dialysis began. When we were told by a doctor to be serious (*muzukashii can also mean difficult*), we became despaired, but after the three of us (*minus senpai*) returned, we were told that it began to recover.

Seemingly relieved after hearing the story again, the smiling-while-crying Aizawa wipes her tears with her finger.

“Surely, grandma has watched over...”

“...Un, I think so too”

By the way, it seemed like that mouse doll was put near Clair all the time during the dialysis. I feel warm while thinking that Clair’s miraculous recovery is not just a mere coincidence.

Shinonome seems to feel the same as me, she lowers her eyes quietly and has a gentle look.

“Because the petal was digested in the stomach and the toxin was circulated in the body after that, sign of recovery should be seen several days later at the earliest. I’m not a person who believes in a too unscientific thing, but this time...I feel like believing it”

Suddenly, I remember Shinonome when Aizawa and Amami-senpai was crying.

Shinonome too, was crying at that time, I think? Because she has a strong image of someone who is more reliable than a man like me, for a moment I thought it was a mistake. But perhaps, it’s true...

Next time, when it’s suitable, should I try confirming it?

I don’t know why I’m worried about Shinonome who is already known as a bitch.

——Thinking that the last thing to do is the work as the club president, I straighten

myself.

“Amami-senpai, with this, is the solution to the request about Clair all right?”

“A, *un*. Of course, it’s all right”

Sempai shows the best smile up to now. And then, she looks down a little.

“Because Clair’s case was solved, next is to reconcile with him...I, will try my best”

“A, about that. Please wait a little——”

n? Aizawa, what did she search for in her bag?

Aizawa takes out a thick book with school’s library label pasted on it.

“I’m bothered why boyfriend-san gave you white lilies instead of roses which is your favorite, so I tried checking in the library. Please look at this page a little”

The cheerful Aizawa opens the page with a tag sticking out and puts the book on the table.

It was difficult for me to see as i was in opposite direction, but things related to white lily was written there.

“I see”

Shinonome seemed to already understand, she looks at Shinonome with an admired look.

“Senpai, you told us, right? Boyfriend-san didn’t say what part of you he liked, it became a quarrel because he felt silent”

“*Un*. It was the flower in the beginning, and eventually it became the cause...”

“Then, I think you can reconcile immediately. Because, boyfriend-san properly told what part of Amami-senpai he liked”

Aizawa points at while lily’s [Flower Language] column.

...A, so that's why.

Amami-senpai looks at that sentence, she opens her eyes wide and murmurs.

"Innocence, purity...this is" (無垢、清浄 both mean purity)

Shinonome closes her eyes and, breaks it into easy to understand words and conveys.

"In other words, isn't it because boyfriend-san like the honest and beautiful-hearted senpai?"

Aizawa continues.

"Perhaps, boyfriend-san is a shy person? Therefore, he tried to convey his felling with flower, I think"

"..."

As if remembering the feeling to her beloved person, Amami-senpai blushes slightly. She suddenly stood up from her seat.

"A, ano! I, have to go"

Senpai who become flustered goes towards the clubroom door and starts running.

And just before leaving, she looks back as if remembering something.

"This gratitude, I will properly do it again! In your day off, please come to Garnir"

"a, wait...she's gone"

I smile wryly and scratch my cheek.

The footstep sound becomes more distant, announcing that we cleared a trial.

But I was filled by a hard-to-describe sense of accomplishment, right now it isn't like a trial in my mind right now.

The two girls seem to think the same, the clubroom of the literature club was covered with a comfortable silence.

CHAPTER 3

LOCKED ROOM CASE

(CONSULTATION DIFFICULTY II)

“Fuu, today is a good day, isn’t it?”

On my way back home through the quiet residential area illuminated by the street light, I was in a very good mood.

Because, although I couldn’t play an active part by myself, somehow Amami-senpai’s request to the club was solved. The results are that Clair’s life was saved and Amami-senpai must have reconciled with her boyfriend.

I couldn’t feel bad with that. But, there is another reason for this good mood.

Because today, not even one consultant came, I was able to enjoy my hobby in the clubroom after a long time.

Just like my heart was watered after several days, I who felt the happiness throughout my body kept my smile the whole time in the clubroom.

Because Aizawa was reading a fashion magazine happily and Shinonome also read after finishing the work of the student council, there wasn’t any nuisance in particular or anything worth mentioning.

“Un, good. As it is right now then I think I can act the same as before!” (*as in enjoying his hobby in the club*)

Because I speak loudly, the passersby on the street was surprised——but I don’t mind.

A, but wait. We still haven’t cleared all the trials, I think.

The culprit who is the sender of the letter hasn’t come to contact with the literature club yet.

In other words, the busy days like a few days ago may return?

“But if we clear all the trials, a day like today may come again. If so, it’s nothing *(to be afraid)*”

I don’t know the trials will continue for how long, but next time, without Shinonome’s help, I will show that I can regain the literature club’s tranquility with my own hands. And then, I will enjoy two-dimensional stuffs again like today!

Like that, I quickly reach my house.

“I’m home—”

I opened the entrance hall door with an unusual cheerful voice.

“A, nii-san. Welcome home”

Sharte who is wearing the uniform of houtou junior high school is sitting on the floor grasping her knees. In her hand is a ladle, it seems like she’s in the middle of cooking.

“I’m home, Sharte. Etto, you waited for me at the entrance today too?”

“*Hai*. Because, waiting like this is a little sister’s duty”

Sharte stands up and quietly waits for me who is smiling wryly to come in. Despite her expressionless and the voice without any intonation, I understand that Sharte is pleased.

Every time I return, she always acts like this happily. By the way, if the current Sharte had a tail, there’s no doubt that it would be waving with all its strength right now——it’s because she’s pleased.

I arrange my shoes and come in to the house. When I look at Sharte, she already opened her arms lightly.

“Nii-san. The usual, please”

“*Un*, of course——”

I gently hug the small body which has a faint, nice smell.

My imouto also hug me gently.

“Sharte, you did your best alone today too, right?”

“...*Hai*. Because I don’t want to trouble Nii-san”

As if checking my warmth, she tightens moderately.

Because of the war, Sharte lost her real family so there’s no undulation in her feeling now.

If I leave her side even just a little, there will be a gap.

Because of that, she didn’t separate from me who became her new family. But, not going to our schools is no good. Therefore, she always does this when I return.

“Sharte is so admirable. Despite the fact that being separated from me is scary, you do your best and go to school diligently. You was so excellent that you are the student council president now, I’m relieved because of that”

“...If so, I’m happy”

I was surprised when the information came after Sharte became the student council president.

Though I don’t know the reason of her becoming a candidate because she doesn’t tell me...

“But Sharte, you really have grown up. In the past, after I returned from school, you immediately leaped towards and followed me. Do you still remember?”

“Nii-san, please don’t say anymore”

As if embarrassed, she hugs me more.

Peeking at her face from the side, her ear slightly reddened.

I think in those days, when she went to school in the morning, she didn’t want to separate from me and fretted. It was very troublesome, but after I protected Sharte from the bully, she didn’t say any selfish thing anymore.

...*Maa*, the consequence was I had to go through that instead.

Feeling gloomy by the result of remembering that unpleasant memory, I exert myself to act brightly.

“Other than that, Sharte, is it fine now?”

“.....*Hai*. I think I can do by best tomorrow with this”

“I see. then it’s fine——”

I separate our bodies and go towards the living room, Sharte quietly entwines both her hands around my arm.

Inside the house, I and my imouto always have such a feeling. Except the time in toilet, we are together almost every time and don’t separate from others’ side.

When we enter the living room, a nice smell drifted from the kitchen.

“Dinner today is curry huh——*tte*, Yaga. You already returned?”

When I pull the chair of the dinning table out to put my bag on, there was a white, beautiful female cat sleeping on it.

“It returned in the evening. Probably, I think it just played outside again”

“Haha...you are really a whimsical cat, aren’t you? This time, you are outside for five days”

Yaga was originally a stray, because it was very beautiful, Sharte picked it up in the past.

For the time being, I put my bag on the chair nearby and go to the kitchen with Sharte.

“Yoshi, then Sharte. Though I intend to help, what should I do?”

“Thank you, nii-san. Well...because the curry has boiled well,

Can you cut the vegetables to put in the salad?”

“Okay. Leave it to me”

—*tee*, would the tomato I disliked be prepared today too?

While grieving, I cut the vegetables using my dominant hand while Sharte is using a tool to skim the scum from the already boiled liquid—after a short time, Sharte is joining hand with me for the dining table.

“Then, *itadakimasu*”

“*Hai*. Please eat everything and grow big”

“Haha, but I’m already big enough”

I fill my mouth with the delicious curry. After having made sure of the situation, Sharte also began to eat the meal.

On the floor next to the table, Yaga is eating cat food.

In the past, Yaga’s feeding ground was near the kitchen,

but because Sharte said “Cat is also an important family member” and her request was accepted, its feeding ground changed to next to the dining table.

By the way, Sharte also thinks of her new parents as important. For the two who don’t return from the foreign countries for a long time, there are two big, red and blue bear dolls placed on two seats in front of me. She won’t treat as if they are not here.

Precisely because she had tasted the bitterness of losing her precious ones, she regards the happiness in her hand as important—Feeling like that’s what Sharte is thinking, I stare at her face from the side as if to watch out for a short while.

“Nii-san, what happened?”

“A, *iya*...just a little”

“?”

Sharte looks at me in puzzlement. Looking at Sharte like that, I remember the lonely-like purr of Clair who lost its beloved grandma.

I don’t want Sharte, who is my important family, to feel like Clair for a second time.

“Sharte. I, will always be by your side. Therefore, you can feel at ease”

“Nii-san?”

Once again, the promise I took before is mentioned, Sharte now has a wondering look on her face.

But, she seems to understand what I think somehow and nods **kokun**.

“I believe, in Nii-san”

——**gyuu** I’m embraced, and two soft swellings are pushed against my arm.

I remember the feeling of embarrassment, and avert my face from my *imouto*. Then Sharte whispers with a small voice.

“Other than that, Nii-san”

“W, what?”

Somehow, hearing the seemingly pleasant voice of her, I’m startled.

“Tomato, regardless of your preference, please eat them”

I was stared with the quiet, motionless eyes.

I, who admired my imouto’s splendidly growth, reluctantly threw that red evil thing in my mouth.



The big chorus of the cicadas echoes under the transparent-like blue sky.

The clubroom was engulfed in the heat of the noon, the scenery wavered by heat waves can be seen from the window.

“So hot, Aizawa...”

“U, un...”

Aizawa smiles awkwardly while brushing her forelock to her ear.

She then uses a handkerchief to wipe the drops of sweat which slide quickly from her white nape to her cleavage.

“Other than that, Ikuno, this place...doesn’t have an electric fan?”

“...Gomen. I started to establish the club when summer approached so I couldn’t prepare”

“I, I see.....it can’t be helped if that’s the case”

Today, Saturday is originally a day off. But because we are in preparation for the school festival one week later and for the preparation, we have to go to school in today’s morning only. After school, we finished our class exhibition – the maid cafe’s preparations, but because Shinonome is the executive committee, she hasn’t come to the clubroom.

Aizawa laughingly says in hesitation.

“.....nee, Ikuno, can’t we stop the club activities, for today?”

“Iya, I want to do that too but...hora, other clubs still do their activities so――”

From the outside of the window is the vigorous voice of students participating in the club activities.

“And, we don’t know then the consultant possessing the assigned trial――or the sender of the letter will come. Therefore, for the time being”

“A, I see...I didn’t think that far in my head”

The fair-skinned, angel-like beautiful girl smiles *ehehe* That smile alone is the salvation in this heat.

“Etto...Aizawa, come to think of it, the manga you borrowed the other day, have you read it?”

“e...manga?”

“Un. If I’m not mistaken, the other day you said that you would read and return it immediately”

“A”

She opens her big eyes wide and puts her hand on her mouth, her face looks like saying *shimatta* (*oops!*)

Aizawa, you completely forgot, right? What a very easy to understand girl...

Although it seemed like she immediately listened to the CD borrowed from Shinonome, she still hasn’t read the manga borrowed from me yet?

Previously, Aizawa said she wanted to experience the hobby of people she likes, but seeing this result, it’s obvious that her interest in me is thin.

As expected, she just borrowed on a whim. Maa, in the first place, there is no reason for Aizawa who is a stylish gyaru to have an interest in something like manga — is what I think but...

“I, Ikuno, you are misunderstanding. *Sono*, it’s not like I’m not particularly interested in it...but that manga, *etto*...”

For some reason, she hangs her head in shame and becomes deep red, holding her fist tightly.

And, she is flustered as her eyes are wandering about as if to search for words, then with a small voice.

“*Gomen*. When I have time, I will read it so...can you wait just a bit longer?”

“U, un...if that’s the case, it’s fine”

While answering so, I remember that unpleasant memory.

The story during middle school. From my beautiful classmate (an extreme *fujoshi*), I was told that she wanted me to lend a certain shounen manga, a total of 36 volumes (三六巻分) was lent. But I listened to the remarks similar to a while ago many times and finally, even one book wouldn’t return — that’s why I end up being cautious even if it’s Aizawa. (*fujoshi* = girl who likes yaoi aka boy x boy stuff)

...Iya, but Aizawa is a very good girl. I must not lose my trust in her. She's busy with study and part-time job, it must be impossible *(to read the manga)*

““ ””
...”

tte, the mood became somewhat unpleasant.

I naturally bring up another subject as I feel like it's my responsibility.

“E —tto...Aizawa, other than that, don't you feel thirsty?”

“...e? a, un...that's right. When it's this hot, one's throat may dry-up as expected”

Aizawa raises her face which is still a little red and smiles femininely.

Thinking more about it, because Aizawa and Shinonome were here, I was able to protect my important literature club, right? And the present time too, as long as we solve the request of the letter's sender, the future where I can do my activities pleasantly in the clubroom will be saved. Thinking so, I want to do something to show my gratitude to the beautiful girl in front of me.

“Yoshi, then Aizawa, today I will treat you juice!”

“e, treat me...Ikuno, what's wrong with you, suddenly?”

“Maa it's just a trifle. What's good? Just tell me what you want, I will buy it at the vending machine in front of the school cafeteria”

“I, I'm fine already! Such a thing, it feels bad, somehow”

bunbun Aizawa waves both hands in front of her face *(sfx for shaking/waving strongly)*

Fu —mu.

All the beautiful girls I've met are bitches, if it was them, they absolutely would make me treat them. Then there's no doubt that they would say with delight that it was the spoil of war achieved using their own appearance and loveliness.

But Aizawa refused without hesitation.

...How should I say, to me, Aizawa is really — the first beautiful girl. (*as in, he doesn't think others "beautiful girls" he has met are beautiful girls*)

"Ikuno...?"

Because I became conscious, my face must have become red.

Aizawa stares at me with anxiety.

"Nee, what's wrong?"

"a, don't worry about it. I was just in a daze"

"A daze...you, don't tell me!?"

The hairdo of Aizawa who sits next to me shakes as she suddenly approaches with a serious expression.

"Ikuno, don't tell me it's heatstroke!? My face, can you see there is exactly one!?"

"I, I can...I can see it perfectly. *Sono*, can we separate. I wonder?"

"a..."

Her well-defined, thin eyebrows changed into the letter ヽ (ha), this time it was Aizawa's turn to blush.

"Go, gomen...I was frightened and lost my mind...sono, I was worried about Ikuno"

"U, uun, it was fine"

Aizawa sits down properly, puts both of her hands on her knees and looks downward —I also do the same.

The awkward atmosphere is floating. But because Aizawa is someone who can quickly change into refreshed state——

"Ahaha. Leaving that aside...can't we go to buy juice together?"

"E?"

“Hora, because it’s better to buy one’s own share, giving someone a treat is kinda unfair. Therefore, let’s go and buy together. Doing it that way, I think it will taste delicious when we drink it together♪”

GUHA?

Just now, what was that!?

I feel like Aizawa just strangely shined **kirakira** ...!

It was such a solemn shine that I completely believed that she was an angel or a saint. Although it’s Aizawa who shows a bright smile similar to the sun, normally she can’t show such a face to others man. Because she shows such a face to me only...

――tte, what am I thinking!?



It's only because I'm a common, harmless to human and animal existence, Aizawa doesn't think anything else about me in particular. I must not misunderstand. Besides, Aizawa is a beautiful girl, even if she's not a bitch but it's necessary to be cautious just in case.

"Maa, if Aizawa said so. ...Then, let's go"

"Un!"

Nonetheless, she answers frankly.

Extremely cute.

Somehow, she seems to be extremely happy and checks her purse, although it's only because she will go to buy juice with me, it feels like she's a completely unwary girl who is about to go out with her beloved boyfriend.

"Ikuno, sorry for making you wait. Then, let's go"

And then, when we took one step towards the door of the clubroom.

tonton...the door is knocked, and opened slowly.

Standing there is a petite female student, she says with a crying face.

"Ano, I came because of someone's recommendation. Please, please help me!"

I and Aizawa look at each other, we both smile awkwardly.

It seems like, the juice will have to wait for a while.

While praying that I won't collapse because of heatstroke, I led the girl to the inside.



The girl's name is Tadokoro Nao, she's a second-year who works as the treasurer in the student council.

With the restless cicada's sound from my back, I look at Tadokoro-senpai who is sitting opposite to me.

“...”

Such a small girl is a second-year student, it's a bit hard to believe.

The short-haired, child-faced girl becomes dejected and hangs her head in shame although normally, she's cheerful.

...But considering the subject of the consultation, it's natural.

Aizawa who sits next to me talks seriously while looking downward.

“The key of the school's treasury...why did Kimura-sensei forget such an important thing? If sensei was careful, perhaps it wouldn't be stolen”

Sensei forgot the key of the treasury in the student council's room. Because it was stolen, the request for us was to search for it. After being silent for a little while, Tadokoro-senpai opens her mouth.

“Kimura-sensei, because she's still young and energetic, when she obtained the key of the treasury which contained a large amount of money, she ended up fluttering about a little. I was told that, after the vice principal put the balance of the school festival budget, because it seemed like he became busy, he seemed to entrust the return of the key to Kimura-sensei...and, she came to the student council room to show off”

...*Yareyare*, sensei is completely like a child.

I sigh just by thinking about it, and ask senpai kindly.

“By the way, who is the one recommended senpai to come here?”

“E.....*etto*, that”

After suddenly becoming restless, she lowers her head **pekori**

“E, excuse me! I can't say it because I promised, gomenasai!”

As expected.

“No, it's all right. Please don't mind it”

“ .. ”

Aizawa seems to understand too as she sends a meaningful glance to me.

The person who recommended Tadokoro-senpai to come here must be that letter's sender [Hanikamu Iyo]. Similar to the time with Amami-senpai, the sender has seen this from the point where he/she muzzles senpai in order not to reveal his/her own name. Then, the case this time is one of the trials too?

Because Shinonome hasn't come today, this is a chance to try my best as the club president. Also, if I leave a result here the moment the literature club regains its peace, the time Shinonome acts like she's important will end.

Yesterday, the time of supreme bliss when I enjoyed after a long time in the clubroom.

To enjoy this thoroughly without reservation, I will do my best now!

“The key of the treasury which Kimura-sensei left in the student council room must have been stolen by someone——what we understand is only that part. That's why, Tadokoro-senpai, firstly, can we hear the detailed situation at that time?”

“Un. We should start from that, right? Tadokoro-senpai, can you tell us?”

Shinonome isn't here so Aizawa becomes anxious, but when I take the lead, she shows a bright expression.

“Hai, etto——”

After senpai stared at the floor as if to arrange what happened inside her head,

“Today, there is a committee meeting about everything related to the school festival after school, right?”

I and Aizawa nod. Because Shinonome attends at the committee meeting, she's not here right now.

“After that, the student council must participate in the meeting, I, thinking of finishing the accumulated accounting works, went to the student council room immediately after school...because if the works were behind the schedule, the vice president would become scary”

Tadokoro-senpai says so, and her body becomes smaller.

E—tto, haha...that vice president is such a scary person?

Aizawa seems not to know how to react just like me, she smiles wryly.

Senpai understands and hasten the story in a hurry.

“When I came to the student council room, the lock was already opened, Kimura-sensei and vice president were inside. Because of this heat, the windows were fully opened and the electric fans were turned on. And Kimura-sensei—”

“Was boasting about her obtaining the key of the treasury, wasn’t she?”

When I ask, senpai sadly nods.

“She was boasting and saying something like [I have become a billionaire with this! gahaha!] “

Senpai tells us clearly by mimicking the gesture of something like a monster (*kaijuu*).

“a, ahaha...Ikuno, Kimura-sensei is an amazing person, isn’t she?”

“*Maa*, in a sense”

Both Aizawa and I have a dry smile.

“And Kimura-sensei, after boasting thoroughly, remembered some errands and suddenly left and hasn’t returned. Well, she forgot the key... As all other members of the student council had attended the meeting, if the vice president didn’t begin to go to the meeting soon, it would be bad—”

“Because of that, Senpai was told to return the key to the staff room, right?”

“*Hai*...I was told so. But immediately after vice president left, I...*ano*”

Her cheeks suddenly redden, Tadokoro-senpai puts both her forefingers together and fidgets.

I, who try to hasten the story to its main points, don’t understand and become puzzled.

And Aizawa seems to be worried.

“After vice president-san left, what happened?”

“e...sono...I...”

While her short hair is fluttering in the summer wind, she shyly looks downward and says.

“Sono...I, came to the, t, toilet...uu”

Perhaps it’s because there is a man here.

The reason for that strange bashfulness of Senpai is because it sounds really erotic.

“I, was thirsty because today was hot, before going to the student council room, I drank the juice brought from the vending machine. So it suddenly came...I couldn’t endure”

“Then, senpai left the room just like that?”

bunbun Senpai shakes her head after being asked by me.

“W, wrong! Even I wouldn’t do that. After locking all the windows and the door, I went to the toilet. At first, I thought of taking the key of the treasury with me, but I thought it would be bad if the key was washed away in the toilet, I put it on the desk of the student council room just like before”

E? That, in other words...

Aizawa seems to arrive at that certain answer, I talk to senpai to confirm.

“Perhaps, what you mean is after returning to the perfectly locked room, the key disappeared...?”

“*Hai*. When I opened the lock and entered, only the key of the treasury was missing. Although I checked again, all the locking was perfect...”

Aizawa looks at me with a firm expression.

“...Ikuno, this”

I notice the real nature of this request and nod seriously.

“Certainly...this request, is a locked room case”

A sealed space where all the intrusions from the outside weren't possible. The key of the treasury disappears from inside that.

The thing which seems to only happen in mystery novels, is now happening in reality.

“...Ku”

Since Shinonome isn't here, I thought I could do my best, but this request is obviously a high-difficulty one.

Iya, but I must do my best. After all, I'm the president of the literature club——

While thinking hard, a flash runs in my head.

“A, perhaps! While senpai was going to the toilet, Kimura-sensei remembered the forgotten key, she then used the master key to open and retrieved it?”

“No, that's wrong”

“e...”

“Because, I also thought so, after locking the student council room again, I went to the staff room to confirm. And the teacher managing the keys said that no one had borrowed the master key today. And Kimura-sensei, who went out, seemed like she hasn't returned”

Then, the key really was stolen by someone?

But without using the master key, how could it be stolen?

The methods to break into a perfectly locked room, I couldn't think of any.

When I groan and think, Senpai's eyes slowly become teary.

Aizawa moves next to her and calls out with a very anxious voice.

“*Ano*, are you okay?”

“uu...I, I’m sorry. When I think about the vice president getting angry, I’m scared”

Is that so? Because the entrusted key of the treasury which contained a great amount of money was taken, she will get extremely angry without fail if it is exposed. I mean, that’s out of question if it couldn’t be found.

I don’t know what would happen to Kimura-sensei too...

Knowing that I’m burdened with a heavy thing, I become anxious.

Aizawa knows that too, she looks at me as if relying on.

“*Nee*, Ikuno, the request this time, I feel like it’s not at the level that we can do something...After all, after the money in the treasury was taken, it would be too late”

“*Un*, I understand that too”

Because it seems like the treasury is put in the staff room, it may be all right during the day when there are people. But if it’s night, such a thing won’t happen. I, as the club president, is urged to decide what to do. Informing the teachers or police, or stubbornly trying to settle by ourselves――

Either way, it’s obvious that we should better move fast.

However, before I decide, the literature club’s door is opened.

“――*ara*, we have a guess?”

The girl who could be said as our club’s ace saw my bewildered face and smiled happily.



We explained the situation to Shinonome and headed toward the student council room.

We moved to the main building, went down one floor and advanced through the corridor, leaving the sound of the students remained at school behind. Due to being in

a slump, Tadakoro-senpai walks with Aizawa behind me and Shinonome's back.

“...”

Perhaps Shinonome had a low body temperature from the start, she didn't have a sweat despite this weather.

The cool-looking Shinonome who walks next to me notices my gaze and begins to talk.

“Ikuno-kun, at any rate, you was really troubled, right?”

“...it's a locked room case after all. And it was the key of the treasury that was taken”

I planned not to depend on Shinonome and solve it by myself by any means.

However, why? After Shinonome came, I felt relieved. Therefore now, I don't think her being by my side is not that much of a pain. If it's the perfect, superwoman Shinonome, she can easily solve the request this time too——perhaps because of that thought, I'm relieved.

“Shinonome, before leaving the clubroom, you said to inspect the actual scene, but what for?”

“It's simple. because there is a possibility that the key of the treasury only falls under the desk, so let's check the inside of the student council room carefully first. And if it isn't found——”

Shinonome's face approaches me.

“The possibility of Tadakoro-senpai taking it is considered too, the need of searching may appear”

“e, why senpai...?”

“I think you doesn't read too many detective novels. Not limited to locked room cases, the first discoverer of a case is always the suspicious one. Therefore, senpai becomes one of the suspect too”

That, something like doubting senpai who becomes heart-broken that much...

Perhaps I had a face which seems a little angry, Shinonome says kindly as if soothing me.

“That’s the point I want to say, but listen to the continuation. Seeing senpai’s current state, it’s clear that she’s not the culprit. Because I’m a member of the same student council so I know senpai well, she isn’t the person who can do bad things—because I don’t doubt her so be relieved”

“Is that so, then it’s fine”

I heave a sigh of relief.

I feel bad to do something like doubting a person whose appearance is like a child.

Shinonome, seeing that face of mine, smiles mischievously.

“Are you really a lolicon, I wonder?”

“*Ha!*? H, how did it become like that?”

“Because, Ikuno-kun, you was very sweet in Takatora-san’s case too—is it wrong?”

“It’s wrong. I protected Ten-nee after knowing that she was the culprit who planned the case, the reason was only because she is my childhood friend. And, I say this before but I like the onesan-type. There’s no way I’m a lolicon”

“Hee, is that so?”

Right after hearing a good thing, Shinonome responses,

“Then, the girls like me and Aizawa-san are your type, right?”

“E...? *Maa*, I feel like I don’t make any mistake but...*u —n*”

I recall Aizawa’s figure, and look at the swellings of Shinonome’s poor-looking chest in succession.

“Shinonome is not”

“Please die”

She pulled my ear with all of her might while smiling just like before.

“*Itatatatata*, let it go! Let it go I tell you!”

“Wait, Ibuki, what happened!?”

Aizawa who saw the situation calls out from our backs.

“It’s just Ikuno-kun, well, because he said the thing that must not be said”

Shinonome looks back with a wry smile, and finally lets her hand away from my ear.

“The thing that must not be said, Ikuno, why did you say it?”

“...It’s hard to say but..... he said that if the client was someone with small chest like Tadokoro-senpai, he would be excited and very motivated”

This fellow, what did you say without hesitation!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

Thinking it would be bad if I didn’t deny, I who was being shaken blurted out at once.

“It, it’s wrong, you two! I like bigger ones more than smaller ones!”

“e, bigger ones...a”

Aizawa’s confused eyes became dots, but she looked down at her own well-developed chest and understood.

She holds her chest tightly and averts her face to the slope to the left below while blushing

“Like small chest...lolicon-san, scary *desu*”

Senpai seems to believe Shinonome’s words, she holds her body and stares at me with frightened eyes. ...That fellow Shinonome, the client’s evaluation of me was dropped once again.

I glare at Shinonome. But she doesn't respond as if to say "you reap what you sow"

Haa...something like making two girls' evaluation of me drop at a time, as expected of the cunning, neat-type bitch.

I believed that I was really no match for this woman—

We arrived at the student council room shortly after. The end of the corridor is split into 2, if we turn right and pass the 2nd conference room, we will reach the school cafeteria where the vending machine is put. Perhaps I and Aizawa would go here and buy juice together if the request wasn't there.

"—*un*, for now, the window of the room on the corridor side seems to be locked perfectly."

I finish checking and return to the girls' place

"uu..."

Then, Tadokoro-senpai who is still cautious of me hides herself behind Aizawa.

Me...you seriously want to curse Shinonome, don't you? *(he asks himself, that's why it sounds weird)*

"I, Ikuno, good job" *(otsukaresama)*

Aizawa seems to have simply forgiven and forgotten what happened a while ago, she talks to me almost as usual.

"Thanks, Ikuno-kun. Then next is, let's confirm the locking inside"

Somehow she seems happy when the evaluation of me went down. Maa, because there won't be any bad insects would become attached to me who is her pet candidate, of course she would be happy.

"...Understood. Then, senpai, can I borrow the key——"

"Ikuno-kun, if it's the key then not only senpai but I also have it"

With a pleasant **charin** sound, Shinonome takes the key out from her pocket *(sfx:*

cling-cling sound)

I and Aizawa let out a stupid “e?” sound simultaneously.

“Why, does Ibuki have the key...?”

“That’s right, Shinonome...why do you have the key—*tte*, don’t tell me! It’s the duplicate key...and you are the culprit...—”

Shinonome, while closing her eyes and brushing her smooth hair,

“Unfortunately, it’s wrong. To begin with, in the time when the key disappeared, I was attending the committee meeting. It’s impossible to perform the crime. Though I can call the witnesses if you like”

When she says with that much confidence, perhaps it’s truly wrong.

Besides, the house of Shinonome is rich. There’s no reason to steal the money from the treasury.

“—then, why is there another key?”

“It’s not really surprising. To allow the student council members to come and be able to do their works any time whenever they want, a duplicate key of the student council room was given to each of them at the time they were appointed”

After Aizawa put her finger on her chin and thought “*U—n*”,

“a, then perhaps, the culprit is among the members of the student council!?”

But that opinion is denied by Tadokoro-senpai.

“I think it’s wrong. The meeting was held during the time when the crime happened, all the student council members except me had attended to it. So the criminal act is impossible”

“...I see. I just thought that I caught a valuable clue”

Aizawa looks down in disappointment. I analyze the current state nearby.

“If everyone is white, there isn’t even a suspect then this...”

If we don’t find out the culprit’s aim at that time, perhaps we couldn’t know how he/she stole the key in a locked room either — it’s the situation where we don’t have even a clue

“a — *kuso*, this...makes my head hurt”

“Don’t think too much. But the case this time, perhaps the event’s characteristic is low”

“e...Ibuki, is that so?”

“Yes, but it’s just a guess. First of all, let’s try examining the inside”

Shinonome gently says so and opens the door using the key.

That fellow Shinonome, does she mean that she vaguely knows the answer in this situation where there aren’t any clues? If that’s true then what an outrageous fellow! How high-spec that flawless person is...? While being surprised by Shinonome’s awesomeness again, I follow three girls—.

We entered the student council room and confirmed the outside window, but it was locked properly.

By the way, things like the key of the treasury dropped under the table and the like didn’t happen too. (*which means they also checked those places*)

“*Fuu—*”

As the room is equipped with an electric fan, Aizawa who finished her works is wiping her forehead, looking slightly cool.

But I immediately calm down, stiffen my expression and say.

“*Etto*, then [the key disappeared from the locked room] information is not wrong, right?”

“*Un*, that’s true”

This case, it’s in a situation where it can only be thought as a perfect crime. But

according to Shinonome, the event's characteristic is low. Speaking of Shinonome, she is pondering about something in silent since a while ago.

"Ano, Shinonome-san. If you need anything, please say. I, will do anything so..."

Seems like the vice-president is very scary, Tadokoro-senpai is holding her skirt as her eyes become teary. As Shinonome seems to reach the conclusion, senpai becomes worry too much. We need to take a breather here.

"ano, if it's good, shouldn't we take a small break? As today is very hot, and I think my throat is dry too, I'm thinking of buying some juices, is it fine?"

"a, that sounds good! Ikuno, let's go together!"

I suggested that because I was worry about Aizawa too, so when she accepted it with joy, I felt a little happy.

"Juice..."

Shinonome mutters a few words. Then she turns toward senpai,

"Tadokoro-senpai"

"Hya, hyai!" (*shocking sound "hya" + "hai" which means yes*)

Because Shinonome speaks coldly while having a serious face, senpai is surprised and straightens her back.

Shinonome notices that senpai became nervous, she loosens her expression.

"Can I ask, only one question?"

"a, hai. What is it?"

"It's not really significant. But when Senpai came back from the rest room, except the key of the treasury, was there anything which disappeared too that you haven't mentioned?" (*a note tho, senpai used "トイレ-toire" which means toilet – duh, while Shinonome (and later, MC) used "お手洗い-otearai" which means the same but not as blunt and straight*)

“Thing which disappeared? *e —tto*, well...”

Tadokoro-senpai stares at the ceiling, remembers something then looks around the inside of the student council room.

And then, she lets out a “a” as if it comes out from her mind, her face immediately becomes pale and she starts trembling

“W, *www*...what to do....it, it disappeared”

“what disappeared?”

When Shinonome asks, senpai, while pointing at the long table before her eyes,

“Vice president’s wallet which was put next to the key of the treasury...is gone. Surely, the culprit must have taken them together...it, it’s over for me....”

Senpai’s voice becomes tearful, she frequently wipes the tears which started overflowing.

But Shinonome who looked at the saddened senpai, was showing a relieved expression.

“Senpai, it’s alright so don’t cry. Because, I already found out the culprit”

“*Fue...?*”

At the same time as senpai raising her face, Aizawa who had a surprised face asks.

“Ibuki, you found out the culprit...!?”

“Yes, I think it’s probably not wrong”

“...Shinonome, with only the information just now currently, how did you find out the culprit?”

The information we got just now was only [Vice president’s wallet is gone] .

With that alone, why did she say she found out the culprit...?

Shinonome tidies up her hair which is fluttering gently because of the fan's wind and sits down on the pipe chair nearby. When she looks at us with composure, she slowly open her mouth.

"The locked room which was made by Tadokoro-senpai. To temporarily break into this then return it to normal, the only practical, indispensable thing we can think of is the [key]. In other words, the one who took the key of the treasury is someone among the student council members, except Tadokoro-senpai"

"Everyone has their own duplicate key, right?"

However, a problem arises here naturally.

"But Ibuki, the time when the crime happened, everyone of the student council had attended at the committee meeting, right? I think it was impossible to steal the key"

Right, all of the student council who attended at the meeting, including Shinonome, couldn't commit the crime.

However, although a hole of her reasoning was pointed out, Shinonome doesn't break her composure at all.

"Then what if the meeting hasn't started?"

"e? what do you mean by that...?"

"Don't think too hard about it. If the meeting hadn't started, the criminal act would have been possible, right?"

"*Maa*, that's true but..."

Having received the confirmation from me, Shinonome continues.

"In today's meeting, all of the teachers in charge was expected to come. But because of the teachers' circumstances, the starting time is set to be slightly off subtly. Although at the time the crime happened, almost all the meetings should have been started. But, there is only one meeting which starting time overlaps the estimated time of the crime"

"...By the way, what kind of meeting was that?"

“Right now, the beautification committee using the second conference room”

Even if she says that, nothing come to my and Aizawa’s mind. But, Tadokoro-senpai shows different reaction.

“The student council members participating the beautification committee, certainly... the vice president——”

Then senpai was taken aback and covered her mouth with both hands.

Hearing that name, both me and Aizawa show our astonishment. Shinonome looks at us, smiles gently and says.

“By the way, right after the vice president left, senpai wanted to go to the rest room and left the room, right?”

“T, that’s right. Are there anything...?”

“Just for argument’s sake, but if the vice president forgot something, what would she do? For example, before entering the second conference room, because today was hot and her throat was dry, she planned to buy a drink and decided to come here to take her wallet?”

Leaving this room, turning right at the end point earlier is the second conference room. *(he is talking about the split road)* Furthermore, by going toward from there, one can reach the cafeteria where the vending machine is put——

Shinonome continues,

“And that time, she saw the key of the treasury left on the table, what if she felt that it’s unsafe and took it away——”

...I see.

This room is a bit better because it has an electric fan, but because today’s temperature level can be said as “intense”, standing still is enough to sweat and naturally, everyone wants something to drink. Taking into account the possibility of being thirsty in case of a long meeting, it’s not mysterious if she thought of buying a drink at the vending machine nearby.

And the matter of the treasury's key too, she can't bring herself to leave as it is in an uninhabited room, it's consistent to think that she collected it.

Aizawa nods many times as if she's sorting the information inside her head,

"True...And then if she closed the door using her duplicate key after that, the "both the key of the treasury and the wallet was gone" state of the locked room is completed—
—"

Shinonome's reasoning was so unimpeachable that it was perfect.

Soon, Aizawa raises her face suddenly and shows a bright smile.

"Awesome, Ibuki! You could find out something like this!"

"Aizawa-san, it's nothing to be praised, right?"

Saying as if hiding her embarrassment, she smiles gently without showing the haughtiness.

I have a smile like being amazed, and shrug my shoulders.

As expected, Shinonome is awesome. Because there was barely any hint, and yet she solved it.

If the series of letter disturbance this time remains as it is, everything will be over without me playing any active role.

I feel like it's extremely unlikely for me to win against her even though I want to do my best somehow.

Being shown an overwhelming ability face to face, I can't do anything but laughing.

"ano...The vice president is the culprit, I think perhaps that is true. But, *sono*, I, would be scolded after all, right...?"

As if imagining the scene of being scolded by the vice president, Senpai grasped her skirt tightly **gyuu** and slightly trembled. Completely looks like a frightened child, as one would expect, I end up feeling sorry.

“Shinonome, can’t we do anything? Hora, when senpai left the room, she locked it properly and it wasn’t really unsafe”

“Un, that’s true. Besides, wanting to go to the rest room is something can’t be helped. If senpai is scolded because of that, I will say something to the vice president for you!”

Aizawa who has a strong sense of justice raises her fist and says vigorously.

However, Shinonome sitting down on the chair raises her hand straight to hold her back.

“Both of you, calm down a bit. Although it’s bad, I don’t intend to persuade the vice president. Because, I think that she probably won’t say anything”

I and Aizawa don’t understand, we have a face like having a question mark floating overhead.

“S, such a thing won’t happen. Shinonome-san knows too, right? Vice president is a strict person. Because I neglected the important key which was asked to return, I can’t get away with that...”

Looking kindly at senpai whose cheeks become wet again, Shinonome slowly shakes her head.

“No, senpai. Simply because she’s a strict person, it’s fine——”

And, when we wait for a while, someone enters the student council room.

“a, vice president...uu”

Is it this person? Certainly, she is a bit scary...

As if admiring magical girls, her hair is twin-tailed and dyed pink. Her height is the same as me, which is high for a girl, she is a beautiful woman whose skin is white like other white-skinned people, but she’s also a person who has cold eyes. By the way, right now she’s staring fixedly as if examining us. Just as we thought, she is holding a partially-drunk PET bottle and her wallet in her hands.

Tadokoro-senpai who saw that is convinced, she timidly takes a step forward and asks.

“a, a, *ano*...vice president. About the key...it’s”

“.....If it’s about that, I already returned it”

As expected, it’s this person who collected the key. It was just as Shinonome’s reasoning.

“Ss, sorry. I, wanted to go to the toilet before returning it...that’s why, *sono*”

“.....”

Vice president suddenly squints, she looks down at senpai as if overpowering her. Thanks to that, senpai lets out a small shriek and her eyes become teary, but

“Tadokoro-san, other than that, the works...the accumulated stuff, please quickly finish them”

“*Fue*...?”

“That reply is?” (*can also means “what’s with that reply?”*)

“a...h, *hai*!!”

After having opened her eyes in astonishment, senpai sits at the place where the [treasurer] name tag is put, and begins to break the mountain of accumulated documents.

“And, you guys”

“Ha, *hai*!”

Aizawa was in high spirits and said something a while ago, but now when facing the vice president, she immediately straighten her back, looking nervous. Maa, it’s understandable, because I’m scared, too...

“This place is off-limits for outsiders. Leave immediately”

“I’m sorry, vice president. We will leave immediately”

Shinonome answers with courtesy, we quickly go toward the door.

When I looked back just before leaving the room, Tadokoro-senpai lowered her head **pekopeko** many times over.



We came back to the literature club's room and after about 30 minutes had passed, Shinonome who had finished the student council meeting returned.

Because the clubroom is humid like the sauna as usual, even Shinonome faintly has big drops of sweat on her forehead. While wiping the sweat along my chin, I thought about the question at once and spoke.

"Then, Shinonome, did you know why the vice president didn't scold Tadokoro-senpai?"

"Ibuki, I'm interested, too. If possible, please tell me"

I and Aizawa who were interested in the reason, talked about it all the time until Shinonome came. But the answer couldn't be found, so right now, both of us are bending toward Shinonome lightly. Shinonome who sits opposite to us uses the handkerchief to wipe the sweat of her forehead elegantly.

"It's fine particularly. But, Aizawa-san, please sit here"

Shinonome whose face is smiling softly pats the seat next to her, Aizawa looks puzzled.

"e, why?"

"Because, didn't Ikuno say he liked big-breasted girls? It's dangerous to be near him too much"

"a..."

Aizawa glances at me. She said nothing and slowly moved to the opposite.

Ku...as expected, whatever happened, Aizawa still worried about the remark earlier.

Rather, I'm sure that Shinonome couldn't be able to stomach something like there

were other girls next to me.

“e, *etto*, Ibuki...then, why did you know?”

“It’s simple. Vice president is the person who is very strict toward another person, but she’s also strict toward herself too. Therefore, she wasn’t able to get angry at Tadokoro-senpai”

“? Why??”

Looks like Aizawa didn’t understand, but I understood that somehow.

“Perhaps, because she also left her wallet insecurely too, or something like that?”

Shinonome nods lightly.

“Both the key of the treasury and the wallet are the same. Because she left her valuables, she couldn’t criticize Tadokoro-senpai. Because I knew that vice president was the person who disciplined herself the most,

She wouldn’t get angry — that was my conclusion”

“...there was such a thing, huh?”

All the mysteries of the request this time are solved, Aizawa nods impressively.

Then Shinonome looks at the things on the table and says.

“Other than that, what’s with these drinks? There are three of them”

“a, two of these three are for us, Ikuno bought me and Ibuki’s share”

After I and Aizawa left the student council room, we went to the cafeteria and bought the drinks from the vending machine.

Though Aizawa said “it’s fine” many times and declined, after all I wanted to show my gratitude to the girls to whom I indebted normally so I bought the juice, including my own share.

“You two, because you saved the club from the danger of being abolished...besides,

Clair's case, this case too, you cooperated properly to find the solution. Therefore, this, I mean, as the minimal gratitude as the club president...maa, because of that feeling, I will be happy if you receive it"

"I see, my throat is saved from this thirst. But, Ikuno-kun is unexpectedly sensible toward this, huh?"

She says while making a joyful face.

If there is one word that's not too much, kawaii (cute)....I guess.

"...but, didn't you guys buy this because you were thirsty? Then why do you not drink it yet, I wonder?"

Shinonome asks curiously. Surely, Both my and Aizawa's throats were dried-up. But, we decided to wait for Shinonome without drinking. The reason was――

"Because with Ibuki, the three of us did our best and solved the case. It will be delicious if everyone drinks them together, right?"

I was told so by Aizawa with such a dazzling smile, I couldn't bear myself to drink

"*Fufu*, it's indeed an Aizawa-like opinion"

Brushing up her hair with a lovely gesture, Shinonome closes her eyes and smiles gently.

Though it was Shinonome who solved the locked room case very easily, she didn't seem to know that, huh? (*"that" = the question above*)

"Then everyone, choose your favorite"

When I call out, each of us picks up a can, opens the pull-tab and raises it lightly.

"This time too, thank you. And, perhaps the trial will continue, but *yoroshiku tanomu*" (*thank you here = otsukaresama, and yoroshiku tanomu is like "please count on me" or something*)

I make a light sound with the can and drink it dry.

Probably because I was able to appear like a club president, even just a little, Carbonic acid tasted extremely tasty.

CHAPTER 4

I WHO IS DATING WITH THE GIRLS ON THE HOLIDAY MUST BE IN β WORLD LINE

We already cleared 2 cases of the trial.

However, the person called [Hanikamu Iyo] who called him/herself [Boku] hasn't shown up.

Maybe there will be more trials continue to come, or maybe we will be contacted at the beginning of next week.

On Sunday, while only thinking about such a thing, I came to the movie theater.

The pitch-black hall is very cool thanks to air conditioning, it's a bit chilly.

By the way, after awakening to an otaku, I have a strange policy and do not watch live filming.

And yet right now, I'm watching an uninteresting live filming (a very boring action one). The reason is, I as an ordinary person come with my friends today.

"U...n....."

A person, sitting next to me to the right is the blond-haired, big-breasted, *bishoujo* gyaru who is dozing off while having a good smell, Aizawa Manaha. (*bishoujo* = *beautiful girl*)

"Naa, Kousuke, isn't this movie...boring?"

Another person, sitting next to me to the left, lowering her voice, who has a kemonomimi-like hairdo, Takatora Tenko — Ten-nee.

And the last person is,

"..."

Shinonome Ibuki sitting next to Ten-nee to the left, who is, for some reason, having a scary smile and watching the boring movie.

Something like an otaku like me watching movie with 3 beautiful girls on the holiday like a riajuu, this must absolutely be β world line. I mean actually, because there is a movie version of the previously animated fleet girls today, I already allotted a bit of my allowance for that and yet... *Kuu*...as expected, being concerned with beautiful girls is not a good thing. α world line where I lived, El Psy Congruu...

While thinking about such a thing. I remember the drink yesterday with those two.

“Ikuno, gochisousama! If there is an opportunity next time, I will treat you♪”

“Ikuno-kun, I give my thanks too. Please tribute——treat me again”

This fellow, just now she was about to say tribute, right!?

Good grief, can't she learn from Aizawa's example just a little...

I look at Aizawa whose cheeks are loosen happily after drinking only a can of juice and think so. If I treated her another one, it seemed like she would be delighted to go to ogres' island together with a dog, a monkey and a pheasant obediently.

When I thought about that ridiculous thing.

Tatatatatatata — Ban!

When I thought that someone was running to here from the corridor, the clubroom's door was opened vigorously.

“*Haa, haa*...Kousuke, you was here today too after all...”

It was Ten-nee. She had a relieved look on her face and adjusted her breath.

“Ten-nee...rushing like that, what's wrong?”

She is drenched with sweat, probably because she ran through the heat, and she is holding something in both hands.

When I looked properly, they were juices, just like they was just bought, drops of water similar to sweat remained on the surface.

Ten-nee takes a breath “*Fuu—*”, shows her canines and smiles,

“Today is hot, isn’t it? Therefore, this, I thought that Kousuke must have been thirsty so I bought them!”

“For me, they are...?”

There are also three cans of juice that were carried, I’m surprised and look at Ten-nee’s face.

“*Un...hora*, Kousuke doesn’t remember, huh? The time in kindergarten, when we had a trip midsummer, I forgot my water bottle and had fallen down, right? At that time, you gave all the contents of your own water bottle to me. Because of that, it seemed to be harsh for you afterward... Therefore, all the time, I feel thankful to Kousuke...”

As if she’s embarrassed, Ten-nee whose face became red hugs the juice and begins to fidget.

Although I forgot until I was told, the memories of that time are recalled thanks to Ten-nee.

“So nostalgic. You remembered such an old story well. Certainly, that day was really hot, besides, there were many children collapsed beside us. A, other than that, Ten-nee, don’t just stay there, please enter” When I call, Ten-nee nods **kokun** and comes over to my side by trotting.

“...*ha, hai*”

She averts her face as if embarrassed, tiptoes slightly and presents the juices carried on her chest.

“Thanks. Then because you bring them here with great trouble, I’ll receive them”

I was honestly happy because of Ten-nee’s concern, I smiled while receiving all three.

Then, Ten-nee finally seems to notice the existence of Aizawa and Shinonome as she frowns.

“You guys, what are you doing...n? other than that, those juices are?”

Tee-nee, while being vigilant against these two and staring with scornful eyes, points at the empty cans on the table.

Because Aizawa knows that Ten-nee is sending her goodwill to me, while smiling awkwardly.

“It’s been a long time, Takatora-san. *Etto*, These juices is”

“Ikuno-kun treated us”

“Wh...what, did you say...Kousuke, you...”

The petite Ten-nee looks up at me with an amazed expression.

Perhaps, it’s telling that why did I not treat her, maybe...?

Because in the past, Ten-nee was very selfish and tyrannical, so it’s possible. But she once again turns towards the girls, glares at them sharply and shouts (*roar*) like a dog.

“Y, you guys, are you flocking on Kousuke!? W, why you girls!!”



She bares her canines as if angry, clenches her fist while trembling **wanawana**. And she embraces me tightly,

“Kousuke is my precious childhood friend! If you are bullying him then please quickly leave!”

Despite her petite body, Ten-nee who is full of “I’ll protect you” feeling shouts as if to threaten. Because of her petite body, Ten-nee doesn’t have self-confidence like in the past, but this part of her is still the same as always.

“You are being loved huh, Ikuno-kun. But Takatora-san, it’s just a little misunderstanding”

“T, that’s right! We are not flocking on Ikuno-kun in particular!”

“Un, that’s true, Ten-nee. I treat them willingly”

“e...really, is that so?”

It seems like she thinks about me seriously as she looks up at me with worried eyes.

“It’s fine. I won’t lie to Ten-nee, I said that the other day, right? I can do it alone properly”

The time I helped Ten-nee who fell from the stairs, I said so to her. As if recalling what happened that time, after Ten-nee looked downward in embarrassment, she separates from me after a small nod.

Then, what has happened? After having glanced at the empty cans on the table, Ten-nee suddenly blushes and begins to fidget.

“Etto, what happened?”

“っ!?n~~~~!”

Ten-nee startles, shakes her head meaning “it’s nothing” and looks downward.

“But Takatora-san...your face is bright red. Your physical condition becomes bad, isn’t it?”

“That’s true. If your condition becomes bad, I think you should go to the infirmary”

Aizawa worries, but Shinonome, as if having guessed the situation, says as if provoking. But Ten-nee, as if refusing Shinonome, grasps her skirt tightly,

“So envious”

“e, what did you say, Ten-nee?”

“So...envious!”

She leaves it to her power and shouts towards the ground.

“Envious...Takatora-san, what do you mean?”

Being asked by Aizawa, after a small silence.

“O, only you guys, received Kousuke’s kindness. Although I’m his childhood friend, I didn’t get anything. Why, it’s you guys but why...”

As if she’s conscious of the embarrassing things she said, Ten-nee grasps the chest part of her uniform strongly to the point that it becomes wrinkle, her face becomes so red that steam seems to appear from it, she shakes her body as if unable to calm down.

Etto, this is, in other words, Jealousy (*yakimochi*), isn’t it?

I who feels Ten-nee’s goodwill from the recent behavior become embarrassed, while scratching my head.

“ano...if it’s good then perhaps, Ten-nee’s request, I will hear it once?”

“e...? is, it fine?”

“Un”

There is no reason to hear Ten-nee’s request in particular. But, she bought the juice for me like this, and worry about me one way or another, I wanted to thank her, even just a little.

After thinking about it for a while, Ten-nee said briskly.

“Then...I, I want a date”

“A date?”

She nods **kokuri**.

“The other day, you had a date with Aizawa Manaha after school, right? Therefore, I want a date too... uu, no good?”

Last Friday, because Aizawa said she wanted to have a date, which also served as her gratitude so I kept her company. The time she said so, because Ten-nee was also in the clubroom, she also said about this that time, I think?

“It’s fine. If it’s good then no problem”

“I, I see...”

Ten-nee, seemingly relieved, breaks out into a smile. Her child-like face loosens, looks very cute.

“Then, yeah——tomorrow is Sunday, how about a meeting at once in front of the school’s station?”

“U, un...I don’t have any problem with that. Tomorrow is also a rare day-off from the club activities...”

“Is that so? Then it’s just right, huh?”

But, a date with Ten-nee huh? Recently, we returned home together until halfway several times, but I was looking forward to it because I thought we properly created the time to talk about various things in the past.

Then Shinonome, looking unconcerned.

“Then, Aizawa-san. Let’s meet at the same time in front of the station tomorrow too”

“e? Ibuki, what are you saying? It’s their date, right?”

“It’s true. But, to grant Takatora-san’s wish, Ikuno-kun has to go, right? Besides, the negotiation was carried out in this room. In other words, it becomes a request to the

literature club. Therefore, it's our duty to watch over the date——is it wrong, I wonder?"

I feel like what she said is reasonable, but a bit forcible, isn't it...?

I'm sure that in short, she don't want me and Ten-nee together alone.

While I'm amazed by the strength of Shinonome's desire to monopolize, my smile is cramped.

"Besides, Takatora-san, other than you two, shouldn't it better to have someone else, right?"

"e...Takatora-san, is that so?"

"...t, t, that"

Immediately after the date is decided, Ten-nee grasps the chest part of her uniform even stronger. Furthermore, her shoulders went up and down disorderly and this overbreathing-like, her eyes were wandering around and she was red to the ears. Perhaps, she's really nervous about the date with me now?

But certainly, if she's still nervous until that, inviting other people should be better. If so, because she could relax, I'm sure that the date will become fun too.

Eventually, Ten-nee, while biting her lips in vexation, seems to have decided and opens her mouth.

"O, only the first date...is special, you guys can go. But, from the second is no good...because, the second time, I will properly...have a date with Kousuke"

——such a thing happened, and I came to the theater with three beautiful girls.

The movie has already approached the climax.

But the story is not sharp and the content is too harmoniously scheduled, so I don't feel like becoming interested at all. Thanks to that, the nodding off Aizawa who is right next to me finally falls asleep, she leans on my shoulder softly. Perhaps she is tired from her part-time job and study.

“n～...mother...dinner, I will make it...please rest...”

S, sleep talk? Aizawa, is like a filial daughter even in her dream huh?

Aizawa's sweet smell filled with pheromone floats around. Peeping through the white camisole, her well-growth swellings are moving up and down in the dim place, that sensational scene speeds up my heartbeat.

“Ku.....mumuu～～～”

Then, suddenly Ten-nee turns toward this place and groans

“Fua～～. S, somehow, I feel sleepy a little”

“e, wait...Ten-nee...!?”

Bustling about with a small voice, Ten-nee who stretched herself unnaturally also leans on my shoulder.

“Suu, suu...munya munya”

Ten-nee is feigning asleep and doing her best not to get exposed. But of course, it's found out.

Because, Ten-nee's desire to monopolize was strong since the past. It seems like I was taken by Aizawa, so she must have become irritated. I look at the pleasant situation and Ten-nee's sleeping face gently.

“...”

Wait, this situation, completely like a *ria juu*, right...?

Both Aizawa and Ten-nee are beautiful girls whose appearance are cute, so this is the so-called “flowers in both hands” situation. Besides, these two are subtly different from the bitches I dislike. Aizawa is only a target I should be cautious for the time being, and Ten-nee doesn't restraint me actively like she was in the past.

When I think so, I think the current situation is too much of a happy thing, and breaks into a smile a little. But the next moment, I feel a frightful thirst for blood from my left, at the same time I turn toward that direction, my restless heart freezes.

“ .. ”

Shinonome is staring at me with a big smiling face.

Receiving the light emitted from the screen, the smile which is colored with various colors is considerably eerie.

I immediately turns to the front and avert my face, but Shinonome continues staring at me in silence.

Ha, hahaha...this, surely I will be told something after this.

Leaving the theater and thinking about what will happen later, I feel the chill and shiver.

Then, after seeing the movie, the four of us went to a karaoke box――

“Then let’s smile Let’s laugh at such times～ ♪”

“Takatora-san, nice singer! And momoshiro is really great, right～”

While the nearby Ten-nee is singing a recent popular song, Aizawa shakes a pair of maracas and enlivens the space.

From a while ago, these two are singing, I and Shinonome are in a state of listening quietly.

Shinonome is as expected, as if she is angry about what happened earlier, she doesn’t say a single word.

Even I feel unpleasant, and unwillingly begin to talk.

“O, oi Shinonome, why didn’t you sing?”

“It’s the same for you, right? But, rather than that――”

Shinonome who finally opens her mouth after a long time has a gentle tone. But the moment her mouth comes close to my ear,



“Why was it necessary to flirt with girls while only watching a movie, I wonder?”

While keeping her smiling face as it is, she whispers with a cold voice that makes my backbone freeze. Because of that, my whole body got Goosebumps

Uu...as expected, here it come. But, I also have my excuse.

“It, it can’t be helped, right? Because, these two leaned on my on their own”

“On their own? What an extremely convenient thing you said, huh? Although you looked happy that much”

I’m unable to say anything after she hit the bull’s eye.

As if believing that she had hit the mark, Shinonome has a strict expression.

“In front of me who will become your master, being **deredere** to other girls...If I’m not mistaken, I certainly told you not to do that before”

Is it when we went to Amami-senpai’s cake shop? I feel like when I was fascinated by Aizawa fanning her chest due to hot weather, I was told such a thing. But——

“Why must I be told that much? I still haven’t become your pet yet in particular, right?”

“Indeed. But——”

In order not to be noticed by the other two, while Shinonome quietly puts her hand on my thigh and caresses it gently,

“You are the person who saw through the real me for the first time. If such a livestock which is more precious than jewels is distracted by girls other than me, I will become anxious, won’t I? Therefore, it’s no good”

“Therefore, it’s no good...what an arrogant attitude, your desire to monopolize is too strong you know!? I mean, Shinonome is not a fragile person who becomes anxious like that, right?”

“Well, I wonder? Despite this, I’m still a girl, right? It’s possible to have a weak part,

right?”

The girl wearing the navy blue one-piece looks like a powerless girl. But in fact, gentle but firm.

“Haha, don’t make me laugh. A flawless person like Shinonome having a weak point...”

I was about to say while laughing, but I shut my mouth.

Recalling the Shinonome at the time in Clair’s incident. The person, while Aizawa and Amami-senpai was crying and I was bewildered, reliably acted with resolute. But, perhaps, Shinonome at that time——

“Ara, perhaps you suddenly remembered something, I wonder?”

“e? Iya, particularly...it’s not the case”

“So? Regrettable. I thought that you would want to become my pet when you saw my charm, which is my small weak point as a girl. But well, this is an excusable thing. Because, I’m really a flawless human to the point of unimpeachable. Not having any weak point is natural”

“Ano...don’t say such a thing by yourself”

“But it can’t be helped, right? Because it’s the truth. But because of that——”

While the BGM is being played at very loud volume, Shinonome puts her lukewarm body close to me to amuse herself.

“You must consider how you want to become mine”

“...I, I told you, I won’t become the thing of a bitch like you”

“Fufu, say whatever you want. In the not-so-distant future, you can’t stop wanting me. This is unmistakable, wanna bet?”

Such a thing is not possible——I couldn’t say that.

Because, Shinonome Ibuki is a cunning neat-type bitch who achieves her goal using schemes based on precise calculation. Don’t have any chance of success, perhaps I

couldn't say that far.

"For now, I understood, so quickly separate"

Thinking that it would be bad to be seen by the other two, I says so with a red face.

Right after Shinonome smile closely, she leans back calmly and corrects her posture,

"..."

Me wanting Shinonome? No no, such a thing is impossible after all.

I understand that this girl is the bitch I dislike, and I won't willingly need her. Despite how much of an almighty, awesome girl Shinonome is, it's impossible to force me to do as she wants.

"*Fuu*~ As expected, singing makes me feel refreshed!"

Ten-nee just finished singing, and passed the mic to Aizawa.

"Takatora-san, good job. A, but I will sing next time"

hirahira Aizawa waves both hands in front of her face and smiles awkwardly.

"e...why? Until a while ago, you sang very happily, didn't you?"

"Un, that's correct...but *hora*, today is Takatora-san and Ikuno-kun's date after all,

It was good until I warmed up the place, but it's no good if I meddle too much "

Aizawa seems to worry for me and Ten-nee. A good girl, as expected.

"a..."

Hearing those words, Ten-nee seems to remember that this is a date.

She sends her gaze to me who's nearby only for a moment then looks downward with her cheeks dyed red. By the way, Ten-nee's attire today is shirt with lace and mini-skirt with check pattern, it suited her despite the mature appearance.

Aizawa looks at Ten-nee and **watawata** (SFX for arms flailing around, trying to cover a mistake.)

“Go, gomen Takatora-san. I didn’t really mean to make you nervous...!”

“U, uun...It’s fine particularly. Don’t worry”

Having said that, but Ten-nee doesn’t raise her face and keeps looking downward.

“Etto, o...other than that Ikuno! Won’t you sing something soon? Coming to the karaoke so you might be nervous at the beginning, but after the time has passed until now, it is already fine, right?”

“Un. That’s true but...”

“Ikuno-kun, I don’t know any popular song so I can’t help you, but because Aizawa-san also did her best, you should try to exert yourself to make the date look exciting, right?”

“Iya, I want to do that really much but...”

I couldn’t say that I don’t know anything but anime songs.

That type of song would make ordinary people taken aback, it would be awkward if it uses anime video, as expected, singing that in a date is...

I must be having a face which lacks confidence. Aizawa smiles pleasantly to encourage.

“I want to see Ikuno singing! Every time we are in the clubroom, except when we talk, the only things you do a lot are reading (*books*) or reading manga”

“It’s surely so. But Aizawa-san, you look at Ikuno-kun frequently, don’t you?”

Ten-nee also seems to agree to Shinonome’s comment and looks at Aizawa as if glaring lightly.

“You...by any chance, like Kousuke?”

“Ha, haa!?”

Aizawa seems to be surprised by the extraordinary statement, but I'm the same.

"Wait Ten-nee, what are you saying suddenly?"

"But! If she didn't always look, the remark like the one before wouldn't come out"

Ten-nee who is looking up at me with a face which got a little impatient seems to falter.

"It's not always true, isn't it? Because my seat is in front of Aizawa diagonally, if you think about that then it's not a strange thing particularly"

"B. but! There is a somewhat suspicious smell hanging around intensively...!"

Being gazed by the doubting eyes, Aizawa who looks absentminded blushes. And then
――

"I, I hate Ikuno!!" *(she used ~tteba here, which expresses annoyance)*

She shouts with a loud voice.

Just not, somehow I understand that it's a lie dedicated to this situation so it's fine, but it's a shock to be told such a thing seriously. Because, for the time being, Aizawa is not a bitch.

"a"

When I smile wryly, Aizawa is taken aback and covers her mouth with her hands, she become flustered as if being troubled.

She did her best to make the date interesting but with that, it's indeed pitiful with that.

I made up my mind and operated the Denmoku, picked up the mic (Denmokuデンモク = electronic catalog)

"T, then, hear my song! The cruel devil's sauté!"

Anime song of the animated, hot-blooded cooking manga, furthermore, with video footage. In order not to make the atmosphere Aizawa heated up for us with much effort become bad, I then continue to sing 3 songs consecutively in a daze.

Although it's embarrassing and my throat hurts, I somehow finish the song and take a breath.

"Haa.....haa..."

"Ikuno-kun, your voice is unexpectedly good. But sure enough, the chosen songs were anime songs"

"Kousuke is certainly skillful! But as expected, the chosen songs were anime songs"

"...that's true"

Even Aizawa mutters.

In the end, as if everyone knows that I can only sing anime songs...

"Sorry. I drank too much juice so I'll go to the toilet"

"Is that so? *Un*, I will wait, Kousuke♪"

As if she is happy after hearing my songs, Ten-nee who is in a good mood smiles innocently.

I leave the door and head toward the toilet. But, Aizawa runs after me,

"Wait, Ikuno...!"

"*Are*, Aizawa also go to the restroom?"

She who came to my sides shakes her head and says awkwardly.

"The thing a while ago, I intend to apologize"

"The thing a while ago...a, you said you hate me thing?"

"Yes, it is"

Aizawa dressed in quite camisole and denim short pants, her slenderness is more conspicuous than usual, the exposure parts are numerous and the emphasis of woman's charming parts is intense, giving me trouble to find where to look.

Aizawa averts her eyes from me, while being restless.

“I, don’t hate Ikuno. It’s a misunderstanding. But...Takatora-san, because she likes Ikuno and is having a date with you, I absolutely don’t want her to have any unpleasant thought, therefore, that...”

I see. Simply because she thinks of Ten-nee, she said it like that.

“Etto...probably, I understand that it’s not your true feeling, so don’t worry about it”

I smile and said to her. Upon hearing that, she seems to be relieved a little.

Aizawa’s nervous expression slightly loosens.

“I see... But sorry, it’s a lie but I thought you would be hurt by that”

“Uun, it’s fine, really. But Aizawa is really gentle, huh? You thought I would be hurt and followed me, right?”

When I ask, Aizawa once again looks downward and murmurs.

“...because...my...person...is...Ikuno”

e, what did she say?

Although I’m not like the protagonists of harem-type works (*books/films/novels.....*) who always fail to hear the important information, but the volume of what she said just now is too small, I can’t hear it.

“Aizawa, sorry. What did you say?”

“he....? a, *uun*! Nothing!”

Aizawa laughs “ehehe” as if trying to gloss over.

She restlessly combs down her prided side ponytail, and crossed her hands behind her back.

“Other than that, Ikuno. I intend to order some drinks when I return, but what’s good? Because you did your best to sing, I guess you must be thirsty, I want to order

everyone's at once so please tell me"

*Haa....*why is Aizawa such a good girl?

The beautiful girls I have met up to now were also gentle to me. But it was a hypocritical perquisite to request some rewards — but it's different in her case.

It's truly the goodwill from the bottom of her heart. As an evidence, Aizawa didn't want anything for herself.

Perhaps, is Aizawa really the beautiful girl whom I idealize?

But, there is only one reason why I couldn't think so obediently.

——manga, why she hasn't returned it yet, I wonder...?

From my experience, through lending and borrowing money and things, human nature will appear strongly.

If Aizawa is truly a good girl, she's supposed to return the precious manga she borrowed immediately according to her own words.

Un, I don't want to doubt her too much. But which one is the real Aizawa?

I think so while already knowing the answer somehow.

And, while harboring that doubt, I did my business (aka go to the toilet), returned to the room and sang my favorite anime songs, the karaoke date with Ten-nee was enjoyable.

"Kousuke, Karaoke is really enjoyable, right!?"

We leave the store and while walking on the street, Ten-nee who seemed to have relaxed greatly smiles, showing her canines.

"*Un*, I also had fun after a long time. Other than that, Ten-nee, where are we going next?"

While playing with Ten-nee, I feel like having returned to my child's mind, I forget the time and asks so.

"U—n, that's right. But, it's already getting dark...the next is the last one, right?"

Being told so, I looked at the watch and smiled broadly.

"Gomen. It's already this late, huh? Then, etto——"

It's the evening when the sun already went down, even so, when going out, the humidity is unbearable. Thanks to that, we only walked a little but I'm thirsty, sweating and become a bit hungry.

"That's right! Lastly, why don't we go to a cafe? After all, we haven't had anything except juice since lunch"

"a, that's good. Then where should we go?"

As if having forgotten the date, Ten-nee innocently answers like usual. (enter) It looks like we are playing normally.

But Ten-nee is also happy, perhaps this could pass the passing point as a date.

Then, Aizawa who walks behind us together with Shinonome looks around **kyoro kyoro** (sfx for turning head left and right repeatedly)

"Ahaha. But, there are many cafes in front of the station, so we are at a loss huh..."

"Maa, certainly as Aizawa said... U—n, well—"

When I can't decide because of indecisiveness, Shinonome suggests.

"Ikuno-kun. Then there is a good place"

"e, Shinonome, you know a good place?"

Aizawa seems to realize what Shinonome wants to say, and "a" she lets out a bright voice.

"*Hora*, Ikuno, isn't there a place? A good place with service in this neighborhood.

(service here = discount) Since it's rare, why don't we go?"

Being told by Aizawa, I realize after thinking for a short while.

"aa, I see. It's Amami-senpai's place, right?"

If I'm not mistaken, certainly when we solved Clair's case, she said she would give us a service next time we come.

And, it's decided that the four of us will head to the cake cafe [Garnir].

"——The other day, thank you. Thank to you, I was able to reconcile with him♪"

We went to a window-side table and were talking to Amami-senpai who came from the kitchen.

It looks like senpai is helping to make cakes as she is wearing an apron.

Her expression is also bright compared to the other day, it can be guessed from the first glance that she having a peaceful relationship with her boyfriend.

"You seemed to be able to reconcile with your beloved boyfriend-san, that's really good"

"Un. This is also thanks to everyone of the literature club. Really, thank you"

"No, we don't do anything big in particular"

When Aizawa and Shinonome reply so, I also join the conversation.

"I almost didn't do anything, but it is good that we, as the literature club, seem to be helpful a little"

"U, un"

When I begin to talk, Senpai's face looks perplexed.

And, when those two began to look at the menu again somewhere else, she says to me

with a low voice.

“*ano*, you may be bothered but... Do you still, do ecchi play in the clubroom?”

What!?

—*tte*, she saw when I hugged Shinonome who sat on my knees if I recall correctly.
And

because Shinonome said a weird thing, I was considered a pervert by senpai.

“That is really a misunderstanding. Hahaha”

“Is, that so? Somehow, it sounds like a lie...”

Looks like my creditworthiness from senpai is zero, as usual.

But, it’s already this late so it’s fine, particularly.

“Oi, Kousuke, those two also decided (*the order*) but which do you want?”

Sitting near the window, Ten-nee whose face brightens after seeing the cake’s menu shows it to me.

Ten-nee is boyish and has big-sisterly disposition, but her liking to sweets is really girl-like.

I also choose the seemingly delicious thing and tell senpai the order.

“Then, the price will become half as my gratitude for the other day. Please take it slowly”

After telling us her thanks, senpai returns to the kitchen again.

A short time later, senpai’s mother brings out the cake for us. On top of that, because she even treated us cold lemon tea, each of us received it thankfully while holding back.

“*U~~~~~n*, it was really tasty♡”

Ten-nee who finished eating the cake, puts both hands on her cheeks, happiness aura scatters from her melted look. Somehow, it feels like her cat-ear-like bunches of hair is shaking **bikubiku**, seeming happy.

“Thanks for the meal. It’s also very tasty for me, too”

Seems like it also suits the ojousama’s mouth, Shinonome wipes her mouth with a napkin with satisfaction.

“I also ate the gratitude cakes the other day, but exactly like Aizawa said, it’s really tasty”

“I see! It’s good to see that everyone is pleased♪”

Then Ten-nee who sits next to me has a slightly apologetic face.

“But, I feel bad that even I also receive the service. I didn’t lend my hand to solve Amami-senpai’s problem particularly and yet...this too, is thanks to you guys. And, *sono.....*”

She blushes slightly and says to Aizawa and Shinonome.

“Today, I was bad. It’s your rare day off and yet I get you to keep company.....for the time being, I’m grateful to you two... Therefore...t, thank you”

She turns away and says with a small voice.

Ten-nee must have disliked these two because she thinks they are bitches who have some kind of plan and approach me. But she properly says her gratitude.

Excellent, Ten-nee.

“Takatora-san, don’t worry about it. Because it was fun for us too”

“That’s true. You don’t need to mind that. We came because we wanted to come”

Maa, it’s true in Shinonome’s case.

I stares at her with a half smile

Meanwhile, Ten-nee still looks downward and while a side of her face is basked in the evening sun. *(they are sitting at a window-side table)*

“And, to be honest...there is something I need to talk to you guys today”

“Something to talk? To us?”

She nods lightly, after gazing at the face of each member of the literature club in turn, she looks downward again.

“Literature club, I think that I want to request a certain thing”

“e...?”

Because we truly didn't think of being requested, we couldn't return any words for a short while. But Shinonome who smiled fearlessly asks first.

“Then, Takatora-san. The request you wanted to ask us, what's the content, I wonder?”

“T, that is...”

——Is it something hard to say?

Because Ten-nee has fallen silent, we watch in uneasiness.

I mean, having a request in this timing, perhaps Ten-nee was also recommended by that letter's sender, she came to consult to us?

If so, there is a chance to hear who on earth is the person called [Hanikamu Iyo] .

Even if she is forced not to say, if it's Ten-nee then I feel like she will tell me.

Thinking so, I'm going to ask but,

Ten-nee asked us first.

“You guys, do you believe in “curse”?”

“Curse?”

“Un”

The words Ten-nee said attacks the three of us at our unguarded place——

It’s eerie enough for me to forget the matter that I was going to ask.

CHAPTER 5

“THE CURSE” CASE

(CONSULTATION’S DIFFICULTY...○X□Δ)

After school of the following day – Monday.

In front of the three of us who sat on the sofa in the literature club’s clubroom, was Ten-nee and captain of cheer club — Kamenno Ayumu-senpai sitting alongside. Firstly, Senpai who just visited us apologizes.

“I’m sorry. Suddenly intruding like this...”

“No, I heard about your visit today so please don’t worry about it”

Because today is also boiling hot, I smiles wryly while fanning my forehead with my hand.

“I see. Thank you, Ten-chan. For telling everyone beforehand”

Kamenno-senpai joins her hands before her cow-like huge breasts. An unhurried tone. Quirky long hair is gathered into one long braid and the drooping eyes which give the impression of her gentle nature are the most impressive.

When we met her before, her physical condition was bad and she was escorted by Ten-nee and the vice-president Kurashima-senpai, but looks like she’s in a considerably great shape today, her complexion is also good and lively.

But, because today’s weather is cloudless, sweats are running on that white cheeks of her.

“Fu —. Nevertheless, so hot...”

tayun tayun. Two swellings, which were somehow pushed into the uniform, rampage strongly every time senpai holds the chest part of her uniform to fan, my eyes unintentionally follow that simple up and down movement.

““...”

“u...”

C, crap. I am being seen by two girls in both sides.

Aizawa stared at me reservedly, and I got cold eyes from Shinonome.

So, Ten-nee, with a serious face, hastens the story.

“Ayumu-senpai, to be honest, I haven’t talked about the details yet. I heard that it was restricted to the club for the time being, so I thought it would be bad if I said without your affirmation”

“I see...Ten-chan, you seriously protected your promise with me, didn’t you?”

“Ha, hai”

Yesterday, Ten-nee didn’t talk about the details at Garnir.

The reason was that the president would officially request us after Monday’s classes. I immediately ask.

“Then, senpai, what do you want to request us?”

Kameno-senpai changed her expression into a serious one and stared at me.

“The story I will talk from this moment, only two people, me and Ten-chan, know. It’s the “it will be bad if it’s leaked outside” information, so please promise not to reveal it, absolutely”

Shinonome answers with confidence.

“You don’t need to be worry. In the situation where the information is leaked, it’s us to be doubted. Besides, the consultation office won’t leak the information acquired from the job. Because that act violates the law”

Saying a similar thing before, Shinonome gives me and Aizawa a warning.

“Ano, can I ask one thing before hearing the request?”

“It’s fine, whaat is it?” (*she said “naani?” instead of “nani”*)

Uwa, this person’s switching is really awesome...

As expected from the club president of a veteran school, the gaze in serious moments is breathtakingly powerful.

“...sono, perhaps, senpai was recommended by someone to come here to consult, right?”

“e? *etto*, that—”

A, she has a really troubled face and returns to that soberness. That means, as expected—

Without delay, Aizawa leans forward and asks.

“That person’s name, can’t you tell us?”

“U, *u—n*. Sorryyy. To be honest, I’m told to be silent by the person who introduced me here”

Then, Kamenno-senpai’s request is also one of the trial?

Really, until when will this trial thing continue...?

Don’t tell me, it’s that Kuroki Ami who resented the literature club in return for the previous time? Maa, she’s obedient recently, and I think I don’t hear any wind’s rumor about her...

After staring at Senpai who smiles apologetically for a while, Shinonome smiles.

“Kamenno-senpai, then, is it good to hear the detail of the request?”

“A...*un*, it’s ended now, right?”

Senpai who once again stiffened her expression talks about the details of the request and the general situations.

The contents were astonishing.

“—A, all members of the club collapsed because of the curse, you want us to somehow...?”

To me who repeat the request, Kamenno-senpai and Ten-nee nod meekly.

Yesterday, Ten-nee said about curse or something like that so I prepared myself, but it's unexpected that “that” was the request.

Ten-nee who looks depressed raises her face and explains.

“Saturday of the week before last week, in other words, the day after Kousuke and Aizawa Manaha had a date after school, it happened”

In other words, the next day after the date which also served as Aizawa's gratitude for saving her from expulsion risk.

“From that day, we of the cheer club went to Ayumu-senpai's house — Kamenno Ryokan for a 2 day 1 night training camp. As for practice place, we used a local gymnasium nearby. And, the room we stayed at that time” (*ryokan is a Japanese-style inn*)

“A cursed room, wasn't it?”

When I refer to the information a while ago, Ten-nee confirms and continues.

“The room we stayed was “that”, I also knew that for the first time three days ago after being told by Ayumu-senpai, but at that time, everyone other than me and president had collapsed”

Three days ago, was it last week's Friday?

“Sorry Ten-chan, I was silent about the fact that that large room was like that. But I didn't believe, I thought that everyone would only be afraid so I didn't tell anyone. More or less, because it was the room with such an ominous rumor, I wanted to change to another room, but there were lots of customers that day, that was the only vacant room...

But, because of that, everyone”

As if feeling her responsibility, senpai grasps the hem of her skirt strongly with a melancholic expression.

Therefore, I say.

“P, please wait. Is the curse really the cause? Because that’s too unscientific, maybe everyone of the club just used the curse to have a day off”

“Ikuno-kun, the fact that the room they stayed had a shady history, I’m sure that only Kamenno-senpai knew from the start. Because it looks like only Takatora-san was told and no one else was, surely the club members don’t know that information even now...therefore, it’s impossible to think that they used the curse as the proof for their absence”

Certainly, it may be so. But――

“Then, did Shinonome say that the curse is the cause?”

“*Fufu*, I didn’t say so, did I?”

Shinonome entwines the hair covered her shoulders with the back of her hand and brushes it off, then smiles gently.

“I also don’t believe in unscientific things like curse. After all, in reality, there are two people who stayed at the same room and still in good health. The cause must be somewhere else”

Ten-nee who was having an uneasy face, shows a slightly bright expression.

“I, is that so...Then, the curse is not the cause?”

“Right, of course”

When Shinonome answered positively, Ten-nee stroked her flat chest in relief.

“Then, all members of the club won’t die, right? Thank goodness...”

“Die you said――by the way, Kamenno-senpai, what’s the origin of the cursed room?”
Shinonome who let out a chuckle after hearing Ten-nee’s words asks.

“E, did you ask me? The story is a little scary, is it okay?”

“*Hai*. It’s my nature not to believe such a thing”

It's a fearful thing to normal girls though.

As expected of Shinonome, it's like she really doesn't have a weak point. I smiled very coolly.

"Ano, I'm also all right so please let us hear for the time being"

"So? Then I will tell you, but....ready?"

But at that time, my upper arm was wrapped with a wonderful sensation—*munyuuu*.

"U, uu..."

Aizawa held my arm and trembled.

My arm is wrapped in a soft, lukewarm, marshmallow-like sensation, my face instantly becomes red

"W, wait Aizawa, w, w, w, what happened?"

This heat, the arm which was already held became stuffy by the heat of Aizawa's breasts. (*the 1st heat is 暑さ, which means the hotness of weather*)

"Sorry, Ikuno...I"

She raises her slightly turned red face, averts her eyes as if embarrassed.

"S, scared"

Murmuring with a very thin voice, she searches for me and holds my arm more.

Under usual circumstances, I would doubt that she appeals frailly to fall to a man, but Aizawa isn't a bitch. Perhaps, it's because the number of consultants was low?

A, that reminds me, on the way back yesterday——

After I parted from Ten-nee and the other, for a short while, because the direction to Aizawa's home was the same, we got on the same train.

And, Aizawa who sat next to me was worried,

“Ikuno...Takatora-san, said something about a curse, right?”

“Un, she really said that. I wonder if it has any relation to the request?”

“...n”

Aizawa who looked downward and **gyuu** grasped her denim trousers, eventually looked at me.

“It, it’s not a scary request, right? *Nee*, it’s different right, Ikuno?”

“E? A, *un*...perhaps it’s different, I wonder?”

Though I didn’t know whether she was flustered at that time, was Aizawa afraid?

At the time of Ten-nee’s case too, I think she refused to enter the audiovisual room which had some scary rumors. Although Aizawa is rather frank, she’s unexpectedly a coward.

I find that slightly funny, while my lips are loosening I look at Aizawa.

“Ku...uu～～!”

Then, I notice that Ten-nee is glaring at Aizawa and groaning like a beast.

She suddenly stands up and runs **totatota** to next to me. (*run around fussily SFX*)

“Shinonome Ibuki, move nearby a bit”

“Fufu. I already predicted what you are going to do in general. Here”

Shinonome gallantly handed over the place next to me, Ten-nee sat there and held my arm. Unlike the opposite arm, it was pushed against **pito** by two small bulge. (*SFX: gently touching sound*)

“E—tto, what are you doing, Ten-nee?”

“I, I’m also not very good at scary stories. Therefore I’m doing this”

“E? But Ten-nee, from old days, you was all right even in a haunted house, right?”

“U...that”

Ten-nee who has a troubled face, nervously looks for words

“A, anyway, scary things are scary!”

Closing her eyes tightly and yelling like a child, her face becomes deep red.

Yareyare. Although Ten-nee, about her personality, has grown up, the part of monopolizing me doesn’t seem to change...

While I, who can’t move, is dripping with sweat because of two people’s body temperature, Shinonome who puts some distance and sits on the sofa quietly doesn’t show a behavior of minding about us and advances the story.

“Then Kamenno-senpai, can you tell the story?”

“Un. Then, from where shall I talk? It seems to be a quite old story, I didn’t ask grandma the detailed story so I don’t understand. For now, I only talk about what I know, okay?”

Saying that with an unhurried tone, Senpai begins to tell.

“The large room all member stayed at, hasn’t had a visitor staying in for quite a long time to be honest. If you ask why it was in such a situation——”

“n...”

Aizawa is frightened like a small animal, further increasing the breast pressure to my arm.

Although I’m experiencing the happy numbness of my arm, I somehow gather my consciousness to the story.

“Visitors who stayed there died after 10 days, things like that happened. Of course, it was the story I heard from my old grandma, so I don’t know whether it’s true or not”

If the story is true for argument's sake, 10 days later is.

Because cheer club lodged on last last week's Saturday, today is the 9th day. In other words――

"If that legend was the truth, all member will die tomorrow, right?"

When Shinonome asks, Kamenno-senpai nods and says with a gloomy expression.

"I, didn't believe the curse of that room until now. But the reason why everyone collapsed, I couldn't think of anything other than that, so I'm unable to not believe"

"Uu"

Ten-nee who was relieved at first, strengthens her hugs as if feeling anxious.

I who was hugged by two girls talk.

"Senpai, the story of the reason why the curse happened, what is it?"

"A...sorry. That story is the main subject"

Senpai claps her hands **pan** with a flustered expression.

Kamenno-senpai, she's really a natural airhead, just like her expression...

While I smile wryly, senpai begins to talk with a complicated face, as if searching her memory.

"*Etto*, my ryokan is an old shop from the early Edo period....in that period, in that room, it seemed to happen. *U—n*, murder, or is it suicide, I wonder? With that reason, it looked like a bloodstained woman or a specter (*yuurei*) of a man came out night after night in that big room――"

"I, Ikuno...!"

"a...nn"

Aizawa is scared and buries her face to my shoulder, Ten-nee who saw that pushes her small swellings against me even more.

...although there's no reason to worry, as expected, I couldn't concentrate on listening to the story.

"Then, people who stayed in that big room became ill without exception. And before we knew, people who did the *oharai* (*purification ritual in Shinto*) within 10 days were saved, and those who didn't died after 10 days. But if lucky, one can be saved without doing anything— that rumor was spread out in the town, now [the cursed room] seems to be famous and is well-known by everyone in my home town"

Senpai finished talking, Shinonome who put her legs diagonally says her thanks, looking composed.

"Kameno-senpai, thank you for the story. Other than that, just now while listening, there's something I'm bothered by — the reason all club members collapsed was only because of the so-called curse, but why did you think so?"

"E, that—"

Kameno-senpai talks. While it's true that it was a training camp, she didn't set a specially intense (*training*) menu, so it seems unlikely that it was because of fatigue. Other guests didn't have any problem, so it's not because the ingredients used for food was bad or it was food poisoning. Among the guests and club members, no one had a weird flu, I didn't think they caught an illness, either.

Because of those, the reason all club members collapsed was completely unknown, senpai and Ten-nee's conclusion was that it was because of the curse.

"...I, I see. In that situation, I understand why you believed the curse"

With the summer's noises from behind, I who was still hugged by two girls painfully says so.

Shinonome puts her finger to her lips,

"*Maa*, it's not like I don't understand— by the way, Kameno-senpai, all club members, since when and what kind of symptoms did they collapse?"

"Ten-chan, the first was in the morning of the 2nd day of the training camp, right...?"

“A, *hai*—when I woke up at 7 – the time to get out of bed, third year Sakamoto-senpai had high fever. And she was the first”

Ten-nee says so to us, and senpai continues.

“Fortunately, nothing else happened that day and the training camp ended, but from the next Monday to Friday, the members had high fever one by one and absented from the school. The last one was quite unbelievable but even Yuki-chan who tried her best collapsed...beginning from that time, I thought it must be the curse. Therefore, I decided to let Ten-chan consult and request you guys”

I see, then at the literature club.

After that, upon hearing senpai’s story, not a single collapsed member attended the school yet.

As expected, that strange situation even makes me begin to feel some chills.

“Shinonome, this situation is clearly abnormal, isn’t it...?”

“...”

Although I asked, for some reason she’s pondering around with a worried look on her face.

Therefore, I once again arrange in my head,

Why all members, except 2 people, collapsed?

For argument’s sake, the practice menu in the training camp was very harsh, the fatigue would pile up. But after that, the condition in which they were unable to attend school for many days seems unlikely.

Because two people here is still lively, it wasn’t because of food poisoning in the ryokan, and it’s hard to think it was because they contracted a disease with extremely high infection rate.

It’s not fatigue, food poisoning or disease, they didn’t use the curse to take a day off either.

Then, why?

The reason the club members had an unidentified fever and was bedridden for days...

Then, I suddenly think.

This is really because of the curse, isn't it——

Then the silent Kamenno-senpai talks while her eyes become a little teary.

“The summer competition in August, is the last highlight scene for the third-year. Besides, we wanted to assist our advisor Kawagishi-sensei, who began her maternity leave, to leave a good result, we would to our best in the remaining month, everyone just promised that and yet...why did this happened?”

“Ayumu-senpai...”

Ten-nee separated her hand from my arm.

Aizawa who was afraid until a while ago also releases me after seeing senpai's situation.

“*Ano*, Kamenno-senpai. I, if I can help with anything, I will try my best, so please cheer up”

“*A, arigatoo*, Aizawa-chan...also, sorrry, for making you worry”

Senpai smiles while wiping the tears with her finger,

“I, can only do things I like until high school, it's impossible not to succeed the ryokan after graduation. Therefore, even just one day, I want to do my best with everyone very much. But, if this is really a curse...everyone of the club, tomorrow...”

In the situation where the credibility of the curse is increasing, everyone would end up thinking so in the end.

Tears once again come out from Senpai's gentle eyes.

Ten-nee who was unable to remain indifferent looks at me with a helpless gaze,

“Please, Koukuse, please somehow help cheer club! It’s as you see, so!!”

pekori The childhood friend of mine politely lowers her head to me.

“...Ten-nee”

I want to do something.

But, can someone like me do anything?

If I promise hastily here and can’t solve the problem, I will make Kamenno-senpai sad even more. Though I want to do my best to play an active part as a club president more than Shinonome, even so, I must not undertake it irresponsibly.

Iya, but...things like leaving Ten-nee before my eyes and the crying senpai, there’s no way I can—Then, seeing me who is unable to decide, she smiles as always.

“Really, Ikuno-kun can’t be helped, huh?”

Letting her smooth and lovely black hair flutter, Shinonome slowly opens her jewel-like eyes which was once concealed.

With just that, it feels like the inside of the humid room was filled with a feeling of coolness, similar to when a wind bell sounded.

“Fine. That request, I will be responsible for undertaking it”

Senpai stares at Shinonome with tear-stained pupils.

“Ibuki-chan...can you do it, somehow?”

“*Hai*. Of course, it’s not absolute. But, even if it’s unreasonable, we must hurry. Because, the curse would be activated tomorrow”

Despite saying that, Shinonome surely doesn’t believe in something like a curse.

But she said that, perhaps for senpai’s sake.

...Senpai, you said you wanted to do club activities with everyone very much, even just one day, right?

Therefore, I think Shinonome intends to solve the case hurriedly by tomorrow.

What's that, this fellow Shinonome.

Despite being the neat-type bitch I hate the most, isn't she unexpectedly good?

——then, I notice.

“Are, but wait...that reminds me, senpai, a while ago you said that they could be saved if we did the *oharai* within 10 days, right? We still don't know if this case is because of the curse, but isn't it worth trying to do the *oharai*?”

Then if the club members get better, the request will become unnecessary. But senpai shows disapproval.

“I thought about it, too. But, in the situation where everyone is staying in bed at home, if we go to do the *oharai* for each person, I think the amount of money will surely become enormous. About that (*the oharai*), I heard that it was expensive...”

“Is that so...I see”

Then in the worst case that the curse was the cause, it would be similar to having no way to deal with it, right?

Then we have no choice but to identify the cause that's not a curse somehow or other and explore for the solution.

“Perhaps, that's all of the information we can get here. After that, I think we have no choice but to check the actual place in various ways——then, Kamenno-senpai”

Shinonome has an unapproachable noble-like smile, as if she's scheming something.

“Tonight, can we stay in the ryokan?”

“E...Ibuki, stay?”

“Don't be afraid, Aizawa-san. I will be there too so it's all right”

“U—n, I think it's all right, probably. But wait a sec, I will make a call——”

Like that, the talk advances without a hitch. Favorable conditions such as 3 people, meals, free of charge were given.

We of the literature club hurriedly head to Kamenoryokan.



In an air-conditioned car, I became uneasy and was restless.

It's not because of the nervousness as I'm in a particularly high-class limousine.

"Ikuno-kun, are you worrying about Imouto-san?"

"...That's"

Asked by Shinonome, I reluctantly recalled what happened a while ago.

After that, I returned home and finished preparing, the limousine in which Shinonome and Aizawa took a ride came to pick me up. And, while the luggage was loaded by the driver.

"Nii-san, you really go"

"...Sharte"

The figure of Sharte wearing the uniform came out from the house. I can't see that face directly.

"Yesterday, Nii-san also said that you had an important errand with the guys in the club and left the house.

And today too, you are going somewhere? Furthermore, overnight"

"Sorry. It's the business that I can't slip away no matter what"

That moment, the window of the limousine's rear seat opened.

"Ikuno-kun. This area seems to be a No Parking one, so it will help if you hurry a little"

Shinonome said so and closed the window, Sharte saw that and returned her eyes to me,

“That woman...what does she mean?”

Sharte’s expression and tone were always quiet without change.

But to me, she was mad and seemed like a wife questioning about affairs.

“*Etto*...there is a deep reason for this — first of all, the one who is about to break the promise of always be together is me, I know it’s bad. However, I must go no matter what. Therefore until tomorrow, can’t you do your best and be together with Yaga somehow?”

“Yaga, hasn’t come back since his leaving yesterday”

A, that reminds me, last evening Sharte did tell me that.

Then, does it mean Sharte is completely alone?

Once again breaking the promise with my important imouto, I felt guilty so much.

However, I will cause trouble to Shinonome-tachi if I don’t hurry.

After thinking thoroughly, I strongly lowered my head.

“——Sorry Sharte! When I return, I will properly explain today’s thing!”

“a...Nii-san”

Shaking of Sharte who extended her hand, which seems to hot on my heels, I entered the car. Soon the limousine departed quietly without a sound, I worriedly turned my head back.

“...”

Standing alone in front of the house, my imouto murmured something, she rapidly became tiny.

Understanding what Sharte was saying, I felt pain in my chest even more.

—please don't, leave me alone—

At that time, perhaps Sharte said so.

Surely, she remembered the fear of being isolated and must have trembled.

Since I have such confidence, I'm driven by the feelings of remorse and want to immediately return. But it's impossible for the club president not to go although the literature club was responsible for the request.

...Sharte, really sorry.

Tomorrow I will absolutely return earlier than usual, and will listen to any selfishness.

Then, Aizawa who looked around the interior of the limousine in an excited state said.

"Ikuno's imouto is really cute! She's really white, looks like a foreigner."

"That's true. She's like a doll and doesn't resemble Ikuno at all"

On the high-quality seats installed on the left and right sides, the two girls who sat opposite to each other are still wearing their uniforms. Sitting on the back seat, because I also hurried, I'm still in my uniform and can only smile wryly after hearing the words of those two. Maa, is it not necessary to say that we are not connected by blood? Aizawa, just a little, is a natural airhead so she doesn't seem to understand, but Shinonome seems to guess the circumstance and purposely spills it (*流して: spill/let it flow/circulate*)

Soon the car leaves the downtown of Urotan city and approaches *Ujibashi* which connects to the neighboring town (*Uji-bridge*) When we cross over the bridge and go through the tunnel, different from Urotan where only buildings stand out, mountains forming the ridgeline and the tranquil rural landscape spread out.

"Nee, look look Ikuno! There are lots of greeneries♪"

Because Aizawa who pointed at the outside turns back innocently, I smile instead of replying, then Aizawa also smiles in return. Somehow, currently it looks like the exchange with a lover character whose favorable impression is at max, it's

embarrassing.

But leaving me who blushes alone, Aizawa directs that smile to Shinonome this time.

“Ibuki, certainly this is Kuriyamachou, where Kamenno-senpai’s home is, right?”
(*Kuriyama city*)

“Yes, the evidence is the great number of temples, you know? Kuriyama is the sacred ground with 88 shrine talismans. Therefore, there seems to be many pilgrims”

After seeing Shinonome’s gentle face when she watches over Aizawa who is brimming with curiosity, I also look outside.

“That’s true. Surely, lots of temples can be seen. Rather, although I’m living next to, I didn’t know Kuriyamachou is such a place”

“Ahaha. Ikuno, it’s the same for me”

“By the way, in the relationship with the great number of pilgrims, there seems to be a lot of ryokan too. Kamenno ryokan also received such blessing and prospered”

While talking, we reaches the center of Kuriyama-chou. The souvenir shops form a line on both sides of the road, the white-clothing old people who I thought to be pilgrims stand out. On a plot of land of the line, Kamero ryokan stands.

The car stops at the white stone paving footpath, we come down and the driver unloads the luggage.

“Thank you Jiiya (爺や). Again, tomorrow morning, please pick us up”

I and Aizawa also thank the driver and see the car leave.

And, after passing through the splendid gate of the ryokan.

“Uwa, what a very big Shinto shrine!”

Before our eyes, before coming to the straight branch road, a huge white torii (shinto shrine archway) was built.

Continue after that is a long stairs with more than 100 steps.

“...I, if I’m told to climb that, perhaps I will be exhausted midway”

“Agree. Perhaps, isn’t this the biggest Shinto shrine in this area, I wonder?”

When Aizawa smiles wryly, Shinonome says so and smile.

After having looked at the heart-breaking stair for a while, we crossed the threshold of Kamenō ryōkan.

“*Haai*, here’s the tea”

Having gone through the (*western style*) living room from which the Japanese-style garden can be seen, we received the serving tea from Kamenō-senpai

“a, thank you (*doumo*). Thank you for your courteousness”

“Please don’t mind. You cooperate to solve the case. This much is natural”

Senpai, who serves customer as a waitress dressed in kimono, after lining up the tea cakes and tea, lowers the tray to the side.

That one-by-one action is polished, indicating that it’s not something that can be learned in a brief space of time.

“But I’m sorry. It looks like we are able to be lodged in, free of charge”

“Please don’t mind that either. Because it’s fine if I and Ten-chan offer our labor”

When Senpai discuss with her parents, look like it’s the condition.

Because Ten-nee came to the ryōkan together with senpai, right now she’s already working in the building. Aizawa ruffles her beautiful, thin eyebrows, tightens her expression and clenches her fist **gyuu**

“because you did this far for us, it’s not good if we don’t try and solve the case! Although I’m weak at scary things, I will try”

It’s as Aizawa said. While sticking a confident smile, I say,

“Un, I don’t know if I can be helpful, but I intend to do my best”

“Oh well. It’s impossible to answer this kindness, other than showing the result”

“Thank you. But it will be rough even if you do your best, please enjoy the tea for the time being”

We enjoy the barley tea in the spacious Japanese-style room where the wind bell resounds.

The sun gradually goes down, when the surroundings begin to be dyed in faint indigo blue, Shinonome goes into the main issue.

“Kameno-senpai, then immediately, I’m thinking of beginning the investigation of the case. Firstly, that’s right”

After Shinonome slightly looks downward, as if thinking over,

“The day of the training camp, is there really no food poisoning, no one among the guests whose physical condition seemed bad, do you have something that can prove it?”

“*Eetto*. Because I only heard from the employees that there was no one in strange condition, I can’t prove it directly”

“If that’s so, can you bring everyone who can prove it?”

“It’s fine but...you will have to hear the stories of about ten people. Is it alright?”

Ten people huh...?

As expected, it seems hard to hear the same thing from that much people.

Aizawa, as if thinking so, make a “let’s do our best”- meaning gesture despite smiling bitterly. But then――

“Hihi. If so, I’m alone is enough”

“*Kyaa*”

From I and Aizawa's back, a hoarse voice can be heard suddenly, she then embraces me.

"W, who is it...!?"

When I looked back, at the back of the tatami room where the fusuma (Japanese sliding screen) was left open, an old, small obaa-san wearing the wafuku (Japanese clothes) was doing seiza.

"O, obaba-chan Mou, everyone is surprised! "

"Obaba-chan...a, then, this ryokan's"

"That's right. The active *okami* who looked after this ryokan from the young time" (女将 = landlady/mistress/hostess/proprietress)

The petite *okami*-san who replies to my words slowly stands up and moves to this room.

Although her posture bended a little, the movement was firm, the hair which was gathered beautifully with an ornamental hairpin and the wafuku which didn't have a wrinkle were eye-catching, from the way she moved, it could be feel that she was an expert.

"Then, the good-looking ojou-san over there. Do you have something to ask me?"

Look to the left from me, *okami*-san who sat down near the corridor where the garden can be seen asks Shinonome.

"By no way am I a good-looking girl, *okami*-san"

"Hohoho. Nice talking. Beautiful girls who put on air like you, true feeling must be different despite saying so. In the past, the evil-natured woman who seduced my husband was also that type"

T, this *okami*-san, awesome!

Seeing through Shinonome as a bitch in one shot. She didn't grow old just for show...

"Obaba-chan, what are you saying! S, sorry, Ibuki-chan"

Even the nonchalantly-natured senpai becomes flustered, Aizawa also stares at Shinonome very worriedly.

“Ibuki.....are you ok?”

However, Shinonome smiles broadly.

“It’s nothing. Other than that, *okami*-san, is it alright to answer me?”

“Hou, your guts is also thick...you will surely be a big-shot in the future”

Okami-san grinned and slapped her knee **pon**.

“You want to know the things in the training camp of my grandchild, right? That time, I was sure that there wasn’t any guest who was food-poisoned, there wasn’t anyone whose condition seemed bad at the time of entering and leaving”

“Can I ask the base of that affirmation?”

Being called by Shinonome, *Okami*-san clears her throat **kohon**.

“I’ve become the *okami* here for few decades, in the busy weekends, I would always wait in the reception desk and meet the visitors, or see them off. If the guest’s condition seems bad, I will notice immediately. Besides, the management of the ingredients used in the dishes are done strictly by me. During the times as a working *okami*, not even one case of food-poisoning happened”

After hearing the story, Shinonome lightly lowers her head.

“*Okami*-san, thank you very much. The point that there was no food-poisoning or anyone holding strange illness, I think the majority of it was proven just now”

“Hoho. Is that so? It’s more than anything that I seems to be able to help”

The thing Shinonome would do now is a close investigation of whether or not the information gotten from Kamenno-senpai was correct. In other words, it’s necessary to check another one. I ask.

“Senpai, whether or not the set menu in the training camp wasn’t harder than usual practice, can you prove it, other than by yourself?” (*means can someone else prove it*)

Thus, by settling the information to cut it down, the prediction range of the solution will be narrowed and found out.

This is the method Shinonome taught me. When I look at her, she looks downward and her lips becomes loose.

“I’m no good, right? Then, because right now everyone has collapsed, there’s no other way but having Ten-chan testify. But because the ryokan is large, right now where she’s working is...”

It’s troublesome if we must find her...

There are several buildings, and they seem to be quite wide.

At that time, something appeared, seemed to slide on the open corridor, stopped in front of the living room.

“*Haa*...although I thought of going together with Kousuke after school, cleaning alone is unlucky”

funyan Hanging the beast-ear-like hair downward, the petite small girl sighs with a seemingly lonely face. (imagine the ears of a cat which looks really sad, that’s how her hair looks like) Both sleeves of Ten-nee’s wafuku were rolled up and tucked with a tasuki, the hem was raised and she was cleaning with a cloth.

“Ten-nee. It was just good. We are looking for you”

“!?”

When I called out, Ten-nee was startled and looked at me. The girl whose eyes opened wide and irises narrowed stood up and blushed at the same time.

“a, *etto*, Kousuke...you are, here... It’s, unexpected”

Understanding that the remark just now was heard by everyone, she grabs the dust cloth tightly with full of strength. Since it’s poor to mention, I ask at once.

“I want to ask Ten-nee something. The practice menu at the time of the training camp, is it not harder than normal club activities?”

For example, even if it was considerably hard, I can't think that they would absent from school for many days. However, I will hear our anyway to go to the next reasoning after smashing this route certainly,

"U, *un*. There wasn't such a thing... That day was also hot, so club president let us have a break frequently and take rehydration. Therefore when the practice finished and after returning to the room too, everyone were playing card and seemed healthy. However, in the morning of the second day, only Sakamoto-senpai collapsed, after confirming the development in the midst of everyone else's break, the dinner was a bit difficult"

"...I see"

Then like Senpai said, the practice itself wasn't hard. Perhaps, Sakamoto-senpai's physical condition, because of working too hard alone, was disturbed.

"It led to the consultation. Thank you Ten-nee"

"If so, it's good. E, *etto*...then, since I'm busy, excuse me"

Worrying about everyone's gaze, Ten-nee hurriedly takes the cleaning posture, disappears straight from the place with her reddened ears. (*the "get on all fours, raise the butt and push the cloth forward to clean the dust" posture*)

In the past, Ten-nee was always magnificent, but that sort of feeling right now, by lowering her self-confident, my desire to protect is stimulated, or more precisely, cute and not bad——*tte*, it's not.

"Shinonome, since just now, there are proof that everyone in the club didn't collapse because of the fatigue from the training camp, food poisoning or infected illness inside the building, right?"

"Yes, the likelihood of everything is low so there seems to be no problem. But, right...Kameno-senpai, was Sakamoto-san's illness not something that boasts high-infection rate to other people?"

"*Un*. In the email with Aya-chan, she wrote that the doctor said it was just common summer cold. Therefore, it's hard to think that it infected everyone"

"Is that so...then just as Ikuno-kun said, I think that those three entries are proved to

be outside of the list, we can exclude them”

Having gotten the consent, with this, without looking aside, we move to the next reasoning.

However, speaking of the next thing come to mind.

“Then, the curse is the cause after all...?”

To Aizawa who was frightened and said so, I can only keep silent.

“I don’t want to think so very much, but it’s also the fact that there’s no other good idea coming to mind. For now, *okami*-san, can we also hear the origin of the cursed room?”

“I don’t mind. The grandchild who worked hard at her boring club activities and the like even in her days off and didn’t help me enough is unusually helping like this. I’ll specially tell you since I’m in a good mood”

“...”

Senpai’s drooping eyes turned sharp and glared at *okami*-san.

Perhaps, those two were on bad terms?

Since *okami*-san doesn’t mind and is about to begin talking, Aizawa leans a little close to me.

“A story of the Edo era. From that time, by visiting all temples in the land of Kuriyama on the 12th day, then going to the opposite huge shrine – Suwa shrine, it was supposed that one’s wish would come true. And then”

“To share that world profit, people stayed at the room in question and went around the sacred ground. Is that the continuation?”

“*Ho*, you are sharp”

Praising Shinonome, *okami*-san chuckles with only one eye opened and continues.

“A pair of youth called Kihachi and Hatsu stayed. Because of the difference in social

status, it was a pilgrimage, wishing to be tied together peacefully. But along the way, Hatsu's foot was sprained, they didn't match the day when the wish could be fulfilled. Those two understood the meaning and despaired, then——

"...in that room, they ended their life"

Shinonome says with a serious look, *okami*-san makes a plum with her chin and nods.

"At that time, lovers suicide seemed to be popular. After having helped Hatsu to hang herself, Kihachi ripped his throat with a dagger for self-protection. When it was discovered, in the room where the girl's corpse was swaying, even the ceiling was wet by Kihachi's blood — that's all of the story associated with the curse"

The calm time of the dusk, coupled with the quiet sound of the insects, make my back feel a chill. As if because *okami*-san was here, Aizawa didn't cling to me like the time in the clubroom, she endured it by only grasping the hem of my shirt.

"...Speaking of the period when lovers suicide was popular, there is the Genroku era when the lovers suicide-type drama was popular because of Chikamatsu Monzaemon. It was about 300 years ago"

"Such past story was circulated until now, it's amazing..."

Aizawa finally separates her hands from my clothes and smiles bitterly. Though she's truly scared, Aizawa pretends to be tough. Perhaps, it would rapidly become embarrassing if only herself become frightened.

"The story just now is what I heard from my mother. Until the times of my mother, it seemed like there were guests staying there, but all of the guests staying there had their physical conditions destroyed. Therefore, it hasn't been used until now, but an unreasonable child let the young children stay there"

Then, she look at senpai with a sidelong glance full of sarcasm.

"B, because! I didn't believe it so it can't be helped"

"*Hoho*, Ayumu immediately gets mad. Not suited for the head of the organization. I'm afraid whether I could entrust this ryokan. Rather, I have a hunch that I should leave it to that child called Kurashima"

“...Why does the name of Yuki-chan appear here? Certainly, Yuki-chan is a good, hard-working girl. Therefore, I understand that while serving customers, obaachan was pleased and had a long talk with her. However, I also said that I would succeed the ryokan before. Isn't it a bit cruel?”

“*Fun.* Then don't join the club activities and the like, and you should help the ryokan. Although you said you would do it in moderation, it looked like you tried too hard in the club activities the other days and collapsed. Look like right now, you have recovered, but the child called Kurashima has also grieved. She said Ayumu stubbornly worked too hard so it was serious “

“Certainly, I have troubled Yuki-chan. But, it's unrelated to obaachan, right?”

Crap, before we know, it becomes a quarrel.

First of all, I should stop them.

“A, *ano!* Other than that, *okami-san!*”

“...what?”

Uu, perhaps because of the wisdom of age, her angry face is also intense...

“*Etto...*is it true that the people staying would die within ten days?”

“That story, huh? Maa, I heard that story from mother. Actually, I don't know whether they died or not. Anyhow, immediately when my mother became the bride (*of this house*), that room hasn't been used”

Then, we actually don't know what will happen to everyone of the club when ten days pass.

The current state, about the high fever with unknown cause and many people collapsed, I can only think of the curse. Just like this then I have a hunch that it would be dangerous tomorrow, the tenth day.

“*Nee* Ikuno, what should we do? If the curse is really the cause, it would be ugly if we don't do the oharai...”

“*Un.....*but, it's impossible since it costs money”

I don't believe the curse, but I'm pushed by the situation and become weak-kneed.

The one who can pull us, is Shinonome after all.

"Ikuno-kun, Aizawa-san, you don't need to make such a worried face. First of all, staying here like this is useless, so let's look at the cursed space. During that time, a different reasoning may occur"

""Ee!?""

I and Aizawa are surprised. Because, it's indeed scary to enter it in the current situation.

"Hohoho. An interesting ojou-san, as expected. *Hore (hey)*, Ayumu. It's your long-awaited. Guide them to the room. Without any clue like this, it would be bad if the girls the other days die, right?"

"...I understand even if obaa-chan doesn't say"

Senpai, whose shoulders tremble by the imprudent remark, controls her anger somehow and stands up.

"Everyone, let's go. I will guide you to the room"

Senpai, who shows a grim expression as if the usual gentle behavior is a lie, quickly leaves the living room. Shinonome follows, just before Aizawa is about to leave the room, *okami-san* says.

"Hou. Nice waist and buttocks similar to Ayumu's. In the future, it looks like you will give birth to healthy child"

"he...!?"

pat the surprised Aizawa hides her buttocks with both hands and turns back.

"However, ojou-san...fuumu, you have the face I don't know. Usually, if I see a face,

I will know whether one is the type that deceives men, or the type that is deceived by men"

Okami-san guessed right that Shinonome was a bitch, but seeing through Aizawa is hard?

Though I think it's different, because she hasn't returned my important manga...which one is it?

"Ano, I...e, excuse me!"

After loitering her eyes around, the blushing Aizawa shakes her hairdo and follow Shinonome-tachi.

Having a troubled smile, I nodded lightly to okami-san and left the place.

"Sorryy, Ibuki-chan. Obaa-chan, her mouth is bad..."

Walking on the well-polished corridor, senpai apologizes to the nearby Shinonome.

"No, I don't particularly mind. Because my grandfather is also a person with bad mouth"

With a gentle expression, Shinonome walks gracefully. Because I don't feel any black aura from her, it seems like she truly doesn't think about it at all.

"...Really, then it's fine though"

Putting her hand on her cheek, senpai who is examining Shinonome's expression turns to the front and begins to talk seriously. "I, dislike obaa-chan. We was really close until primary school, but after I entered middle school and began doing club activities, we have been quarrelling a lot..."

While walking with Aizawa at the back, I ask.

"Because you can't help with the ryokan if you do club activities...is that right?"

Senpai turns around lightly and nods.

"Because there's enough people, she thinks I should help if I intend to inherit. However, because I continued to disobey, it looks like she hates me from the bottom

of her heart. Therefore, me too, I don't talk to her if possible. Perhaps, I think we can't reconciled anymore...*maa*, it's fine in particular though"

Senpai said so, but her laughing face seemed sad somehow.

"I, Ibuki...absolutely don't leave my side!"

Having entered the room which is called the cursed space, Aizawa clung to Shinonome's waist and shivered. She didn't seem to have the leeway to show her pride here. *Maa*, because even I think it's scary, it's quite natural for Aizawa to be like that.

"Fufu, truly a coward-san, right? Because I won't go anywhere, you don't need to worry"

There's no person who can touch Shinonome, who is a person of the upper class, at school. Therefore she looks happy somewhere since she seems to have a good impression towards Aizawa who touches her equally.

The cursed space seems to be about 30 tatami mats. Although the room is said not to be used all the time, as if the cleaning were done in fixed interval, it's kept reasonably clean.

"As expected from being called a large room, this room is quite spacious"

"That's right...by the way Kamenno-senpai, all members of the club, in this room?"

"*Un*. 26 people, including me, stayed at this room"

Eventually, only 2 people were alright, the remaining 24 fell into an unidentified illness.

This case, if it's not the curse then what's the cause...

Despite reflecting upon various thought, I still don't know.

U—n.

Rather, assuming that there's a curse, are there any hint I can get?

“Ano, the time when you stayed at this room, was there anything strange?”

“Strange? *e-tto*, that’s right”

Putting her fingertip on her chin, senpai stares at the ceiling, as if to re-think.

I suddenly shift my attention to the veranda. The living room we were until a while ago could be seen in the garden. The outside is dyed indigo blue more than a while ago, the orange-color lightings are lit here and there, which make the beautiful Japanese garden stand out.

“A, if it’s true”

Then senpai claps her hands, makes a “*pon*” sound.

“Aya-chan――, Sakamoto-san who collapsed in the morning of the second day, The next day after she collapsed, I was worried and e-mailed her, she certainly, at that time, wrote that she saw it”

“E...saw...what?”

I feel a slight chill and unconsciously put myself on guard. While senpai is hesitating,

“A woman wearing a kimono...”

gokuri As the same time as I gulp, Aizawa hugs Shinonome even stronger. Although senpai sees that reaction and hesitates, she talks about the content of the e-mail, bit by bit.

“The night of the training camp, although Aya-chan was really tired, she seemed to wake up for some reason. Then because something entered her field of vision, after rubbing her eyes to see clearly.....a long-haired woman wearing kimono was going around the area where everyone was sleeping. Aya-chan fainted after seeing that, she seemed to have high fever when morning came”

I imagine that scene and shiver. A long-haired woman going around where I’m sleeping. It’s natural to faint after seeing that. Because such a thing happened in this room, I have gooseflesh.

“Senpai...by the way, only Sakamoto-senpai has seen it?”

“U, un...the others told me noone else have seen it”

And only Sakamoto-senpai got a fever first. Wait a sec, this is seriously——

“A curse, isn’t it....?”

Hearing those words, Aizawa’s face turned pale and her line of sight is diverted to the surrounding.

“Ibuki! Let’s leave already! This is too bad as expected!”

“...Aizawa-san”

Shinonome also doesn’t seem to have the material to be able to refute the relevant information just now, she looks down at Aizawa who is hugging her with an unusual upset state.

Soon after having grieved, Shinonome has a feeble smile as if being disgusted at herself.

“Despite wanting to unify the thought somehow or other, I came here in a meaning to clear my head, but on contrary, the mystery increased by one and became complicated”

“Shinonome...”

This fellow is a neat-type bitch which is extremely clever. The current case that can even lead that Shinonome around by the nose, it’s needless to say about its extremely high degree of difficulty. Moreover, with the current series of exchange, the predicted solution has changed completely from the realistic route to unscientific route, the credibility of the curse has increased in one go.

We couldn’t formulate a valid reasoning to deny the curse, finally the case is full of confusion. At that time, unable to just watch our situation, senpai makes a proposal.

“A, that’s right. If you reach the limit of thinking, how about entering the bath for a change? Today, it’s planed to have 2 groups of tourists staying, but since they will come after going around the temples, the bath is reserved for about 2 hours. How about it?”

When I looked at Aizawa, she nodded her head many times over as if wanting to

quickly leave this place in any case.

It seems like it's already her limit.

"Etto, is it fine for Shinonome too?"

When I ask with a bitter smile, she looks down at the child-like Aizawa and shrugs her shoulders lightly.

"No problem. Maybe our thought will clear if we are refreshed for a while, shall we try it?"

The air stagnate in the closed room so the temperature and humidity are high. In addition, because Shinonome have felt the warmth of Aizawa, drops of sweat were dripping from her white neck.

"Fuu~~, outdoor bath is good as expected~~"

I looked at the night sky where the sun has completely set, enjoyed the reserved outdoor bath.

Though I was very tired after thinking, the fatigue seems to melt when I dipped my body in a slightly hot bath, it felt extremely good.

However, looking at the sky where the white steam is ascending, I felt melancholic.

"Sharte, is she alright being alone..."

No, I understand that she's not alright. And yet I left my important imouto and felt good alone, I clenched my fist, felt like the worst to the extend that my stomach is crushed by the feeling of guilt I embraced.

Surely right now, she must have a meal alone on the table...

"...Because of my circumstance, I made sharte feel painful, I must do my best no matter what it takes because of that"

If I'm not, making her feel lonely is pointless. Also for the sake of changing my imouto's sacrifice to a meaningful thing, I stop relaxing, thinking about the case this time.

However, after a short time――

“...u,”

Because of soaking in a hot bath too much, I feel slightly dizzy and the ability to think falls.

At that time, from the other side of the bamboo fence behind my back, I can hear a lively voice.

“*Uwa*, look look, it’s real～ly wide!”

“*Waa*, that’s true! Although the bathroom inside is wide, the outdoor bath doesn’t lose to it!”

“Somehow, it’s like myself is being praised, so embarrassing. For now, lets go slowly”

Those were Ten-nee and Aizawa, also Kamenno-senpai’s voices.

Those three were making the sound like rowing a raft and pushing the water away, they seems to sit down at a place near mine. Thanks to that, their voices begin to reach my ears clearly.

“*nuu* ―,a bath after working hard feels good”

“ahaha, thank you for your hard work, Takatora-san. But I’m sorry. In order to let us stay free of charge, you had to do your best...”

“*Fu, fun*. It’s not like I worked hard for your sake you know? I did it for cheer club and Kousuke”

“*Un*, I understand. But well, I also received the benefit more or less, in order not to waste Takatora-san’s effort, I will absolutely be helpful”

“...D, do as you please”

As if being overwhelmed by Aizawa’s proactive nature, Ten-nee, despite being clogged with words, spits out those words. Then, with a voice like a sulking child,

“Other than that...why yours, despite our same age, are that big.....so unfair”

“He? Unfair you said...a”

basha the splashing sound can be heard. After that, Aizawa’s embarrassed voice resounds.

“I, I don’t know, they...they became big on their own. Rather, I’m envious of Takatora-san. After all, my shoulders wouldn’t be stiff if they were that small”

“Wha...! Y, you, did you say “small” just now!?”

Conversation about breasts...right? Perhaps Aizawa didn’t have any ill will, but what I heard just now sounds like a sarcasm. Ten-nee getting angry is also natural.

“*Hora hora* Ten-chan, don’t get angry. Other than that, if you dislike being small that much, should I rub it to make it big?”

The voice of senpai’s mischievous laugh. I begin to hear it from afar.

I imagine in various ways and feel dizzy more than before, it’s my spirit that may collapse at any time. At that time, there is a **chapu** sound at the bath where I soak, there’s a presence of something approaching (*splashing sfx, kinda*)

Are? The party of tourists shouldn’t have returned though. Perhaps a monkey just came?

Still closing my eyes, I think so with my hazy head. Then suddenly, close to my ear, like a suggestion,

“Shinonome Ibuki Shinonome Ibuki Shinonome Ibuki”

“E...?— — — — —!?”

I looked nearby and woke up immediately, the voice which I almost raised was blocked at my mouth by a hand. That person also put her other hand in front of her face, with the forefinger standing up.

“*Shi* —. It would be terrible if the neighbors hear it, right?” (*Shi* — is just a sfx)

It’s absolutely not a monkey. It’s the charming bishoujo, Shinonome Ibuki.

dokun dokun While my heart throbs loudly, she gently removes her hand. With a small voice, I ask,

“Y, you...w, w, what are you doing?”

“Because it looked like Ikuno-kun was sleeping, I thought of imprinting my name on your deep consciousness and increasing your favorable impression level”

What is this fellow saying!?

She’s going to brush her hair up as always, but remembering that she has upswept hair from behind, she smiles to gloss over.

Her thin, snow white body wrapped in a towel enters my field of vision no matter what, I opens my mouth widely.

“No...I, it’s not what I want to hear. Why are you in the man’s bath?”

“Aa, about that———”

She’s awfully cool-looking. Although I’m trembling this much, I’m not agitated at all.

She sneaks around in front of me, then looks up diagonally from below with a suspicious face. From the gap between the bath towel and her chest, peeping at the milky white, modest swellings with a tingle of red, I quickly avert my eyes.

“Bathing was a ceremony to cleanse oneself originally, you know?”

“...I, in other words, what do you want to say?”

“You, today’s after school, was marked by Aizawa-san and Takatora-san, don’t you remember?”

Marking you said...are those two cats or dogs?

Maa, I can see Ten-nee as one because of her hairdo.

“Perhaps, you are talking about when both of my arms were embraced by those two?”

Putting both legs down similarly, Shinonome soaks in the water, looking mysteriously like a fleeting fairy, she gently put the hair overflowed from the bunch to her ears.

“The smell was attached to the one who would become my pet. Therefore, in order not to let you forget who your master is, I will soak you into my smell as a purification ceremony”

Saying something incomprehensible, Shinonome clings onto me.

“O, oi, hey...stop I said!”

“*Ufufu*. Your body is unexpectedly manly with muscle, huh?”

Doesn't hear. Shinonome's cheeks become loose, she hugs my right arm strongly and **surisuri** rub the tip of my shoulder with her cheek. She does the same thing to my left arm, and finally, circles her arms from my back. Her youthful, warm skin is moist, I feel embarrassed just by being touched.

“...*Hai*, complete”

Being whispered with a coquettish voice, I knew that my heart was beating loudly.

She unexpectedly separates from me voluntarily and moves to in front of me.

“Y, you...w, w, what are you going to do?”

Being urged to stop thinking by the confusion, my whole body becomes unnecessarily hot.

“*Ufu*, you become red like a monkey. I don't intend to do anything though. You are making a somewhat depressed face. Something happened?”

Should I say “as expected”? She notices such a trivial point because she always looks at me.

I think of driving Shinonome out immediately, but that intention vanishes when she hits the bull's eye. I don't know why, but my mouth strangely moves when I'm in front of Shinonome.

“*Hora*, after that letter arrived, I almost couldn’t do anything like a club president, right?”

“That’s true, you couldn’t”

Such a considerably honest fellow. Since it’s Shinonome I don’t have any complain in particular though...

“Today, I left my *imouto* alone and came here for the curse case. Therefore, I want to do my best no matter what. But I couldn’t seem to do anything with my true ability, so I lost my confidence a little”

“Is that so? Then please stay like that”

“E?”

“I said “please stay like that”. Because, it would turn out that the solution of the request would be for the sake of the club, if you can’t solve it, Aizawa-san can’t solve it but I solve it, the favorable impression level from Ikuno-kun will increase. Therefore, please don’t do anything”

The little devil says so to make me fall and smiles **niko** in front of me.

Bitch. That fellow is seriously a bitch. It’s not an exaggeration even if I say she’s the queen dominating the top of the neat-type bitches. I’m seriously troubled. I look like laughing while crying.

The former neat-type bitch, now neat-type bitch queen Shinonome looks at me.

“I won’t change that principle though, you are the outstanding mediocre villager A who will disproportionately fight against any difficulty. Therefore, surely this time too, you will accomplish something in the end. That’s what I said. There’s no doubt”

“Shinonome, did you just cheer me...?”

“Well, I wonder? But I don’t lie. Just a little, please keep your self-confidence”

Shinonome is a woman but she’s also a flawless human whose feeble parts can’t be found.

Because I received an official guarantee from such a girl, my self-confidence gushes out, just a little.

“Thank you Shinonome. Somehow, I feel unexpectedly uplifted”

“So? Then it’s good. I’m the one who will be your owner (*as a pet owner*), so it’s out of the question if I couldn’t do something like that”

“Hahahaha...”

But, Shinonome is truly more reliable than a man like me. Aizawa who is scared of ghost and the likes is the type that I want to see and protect, but such feeling doesn’t occur in Shinonome’s case. Because this fellow is mighty, strong-willed. and splendid, a person who can keep on living alone without relying on other people. Therefore I don’t have the slightest thought of wanting to protect——

Suddenly, an image appears in my head. The scene of Clair – Amami-senpai’s pet cat, finding obaa-chan’s memento and licking it **peropero**. Seeing that, Shinonome, in the corner of the single room...

I ask as I want to confirm the truth no matter what.

“...nee Shinonome, you. When Clair’s case was solved, did you cry?”

Somehow, I understood whether she would react. Just as I thought, Shinonome glares at me with a cold gaze as if to say absolutely don’t misunderstand.

“I didn’t cry”

“...Really?”

“Don’t say the same thing. I’m the successor of Shinonome conglomerate, not a frail human who sheds tears with such a trivial thing. It’s impossible that the human who stands and shoulders that house would cry”

I heard a partly correct answer.

Shinonome is in fact a shy person, and so she’s a contrary person. In Clair’s case, I’m sure that because she didn’t want us to see her tear-stained face, she left to the corner alone.

No, it's not such a simple story, isn't it? Shinonome lost her parents early and was raised strictly to be the heir by her oji-san. Perhaps she's not allowed to cry in public. Therefore, that time, she couldn't also rely on me like Aizawa, she had no choice but to cry alone in the corner to not show anyone her weakness...

——*dokun.*

A, *are...* what is this? It's like, my chest suddenly became hot.

When I look at Shinonome, the beating gradually becomes vigorous. Perhaps because of a long bath, my body warms up from its core. I decided to think so forcibly.

"Other than that, Ikuno-kun"

Being shrouded by the steam, Shinonome's grim expression loosens. Drops of water sliding on the black hair and soft fair skin were wet because of the steam increases the sexiness, being experienced that her existence itself is indecent, I unintentionally pull back.

"The answer of this request, did you already understand?"

"E...that"

She should know even without hearing that. Feeling a little frustrated, I ask back.

"By the way, do Shinonome know? Just a while ago you said it was confusing though"

"Me? *Maa*, the majority of the answer has come out. But the identity of the woman coming out during the curse is at the bottleneck. If only I understand that, the solution should be settled though"

Shinonome knows the answer somehow. Although I wanted to assist for Sharte's sake, but if it's like this, it doesn't seem to be my turn this time too. I admire Shinonome who exhibits high ability as usual and laughs at myself, wanting to resign. But——

"*Ara*. When I thought you would have a dejected face after being beaten by me, you suddenly showed a strong expression. What kind of wind is blowing I wonder?" (*lit: a strange turn of events that is rarely seen*)

I scoop the hot water and splendidly splash it on my face, smile "nothing" and wipe

my forehead with my hand.

“But, I only thought of wanting to try my best to regain the tranquility of the club. It’s because the one who made that place was me. Besides, I made my *imouto* feel hurt. If I don’t contribute to the solution of the case in any form, I have no face to meet my *imouto*. Therefore, I absolutely won’t give up”

As if being a bit dizzy, she’s blushing subtly and somehow casting down her eyes happily. “Ikuno-kun, I will say one thing first. I will solve this case. But don’t be disappointed. Each person has a role. The role only for Aizawa-san, the role only for me, and then, the role only for Ikuno-kun. Therefore, you should find the thing that’s only for yourself” “The thing that’s only for myself...”

Aizawa have a sharp intuition, but perhaps because she’s scared, she can’t show her strength

in the requests like this time. As Shinonome said just now, the potentiality of her leading to the solution of this curse case is high.

Then, me?

Is there something? The thing only for me.

The sound of flapping wings of the insects flying nearby can be heard by the ears of me who is swimming in the sea of thought while closing my eyes. After being guided by that sound and arrived at the one answer, I begin to ask Shinonome.

“Shinonome, I want to ask one thing”

“Please” (*douzo*)

“Kameno-senpai, did you say that she’s on good terms with the student council president?”

“Yes, it’s like fellow popular people being on good terms. Until when I entered the student council to help, it seems like Kameno-senpai helped the president besides doing club activities. Therefore, I knew her name before meeting the person herself”

With a purposely demure attitude, Shinonome says.

“Is that so...thank you”

Thanking with a heartless tone (as in saying thank but not thankful in heart), I connect point to point to pull in a line of light I felt in my head. Then, when it almost certainly became a line——

“A, as expected Ibuki-chan was heree～”

“Ara. It looks like you realized”

Wearing the towel on her head and putting on the bath towel, senpai appears from the entrance of the open bath. “You entered together with Kousuke-kun. Nice mixed bathing, let me mix in too♪”

“A, wait senpai...!”

From the back of senpai who began to run, Ten-nee, who put on the bath towel similarly and collected her hair together beautifully, appeared. But then, the bath towel which covers senpai’s well-developed body gently loosens. *(all three words above have the “wear” meaning, I don’t know the difference between them tho)*

“a”

The time flows in slow motion. The moment those huge breasts like Holstein (German cow race) from the inside of the wrapped cloth are slowly exposed, the mystical bumps in the centre enter my vision.

zubu

“...guoooooooooooooooooooooooooooo!”

I received an eye poke by Shinonome who was having a broad smile in the front. A sharp pain like being pierced to the back of my head runs, I hold both of my eyes down and shout painfully.

“Stop a sec...Ten-chan, where are you touching”

“No, I mean senpai, if I separate my hand, you might be seen by Koususe you know!? O, oi, Aizawa Manaha, you are behind, right! Find the towel since I’m busy!”

“E...wa, wait a sec!”

It seems like Aizawa also comes, I can hear her voice as if she worries about here.
(worry about him being poked in the eyes)

Soon after that, the disturbance is settled. Right now, I’m being surrounded by three bishoujo in the mixed bath.

“Shinonome Ibuki, when I realized you weren’t there, you was stealing a march, unforgiveable!”

I massage my eyeballs which are suffering a dull pain to reduce the damage.

Ten-nee entwines my arm without restrain.

To be honest, without this pain, I must have been deep red after being conscious of these three.

“Ara, despite undressing at the women’s bath’s dressing room, no one told me to enter that, right?”

“Uu, such sophism.....since childhood, Kousuke took a bath together with me. Entering the bath with you, Kousuke wasn’t delighted at all!”

“Maa, maa. Keep it down Ten-chan. Because Ibuki-chan-tachi have been trying their best to solve this case, other than being thankful, getting mad is no good”

Senpai gently persuade her junior. After a little silence, Ten-nee, with a small voice as if admitting her fault.

“S, sorry...it’s as senpai said”

“Un un. I like Ten-chan who is obedient. Being conscious as an ACE, the most zealous about practicing more than anyone in the club, I appreciate it very much”

“Senpai...nu...s, somehow...it’s embarrassing”

Since childhood, Ten-nee has always been embarrassed when she’s praised. My eyesight has come back, Ten-nee enters my field of vision which becomes blurry because of tears. She who clings closely to me is being bashful as her cheeks become

vermilion. “Kamenno-senpai, is Takatora-san such a hard worker?”

“It’s true. Ten-chan is stoic like me, a child who think there’s completely no problem with doing club activities even in holidays. Therefore, in the club, she’s always support me”

Completely no problem even in holidays huh, quite hard isn’t it? While it may be true, it’s not the reason why everyone collapsed though. Ten-nee also said that at the day of the training camp, everyone returned after the practice was healthy and played cards after that. As a veteran school about cheer, I think such training is normal.

“Are...other than that, where’s Aizawa?”

Noticing that she’s here, I ask without looking at those three as much as possible. But of course, the white skins enter my visual field, it’s usual that my chest is throbbing...

“If it’s Aizawa, she’s there the whole time”

Scooping the hot water and putting it on her slender shoulder, Shinonome points at the entrance of the open air bath. From the partly opened door, Aizawa who shows her face slightly is looking here with an embarrassed face.

“—*Hekuchun*”

She lets out a cute sneeze. Perhaps, she has been there like that for a long time?

“Aizawa-san, you will catch a cold unless you enter soon”

To Shinonome’s seemingly worry words, Aizawa squeezes out her voice nervously as if hesitating.

“B, But...such a thing like entering the bath with a man...isn’t it unnatural?”

「でも……男子とお風呂に入るなんて……
無理に決まってるじゃん」



東雲と同じように
髪をアップにしている愛沢は、
赤くなって視線を逸らしつつ。

「すぐく、エッチだよ……..
何で皆、そんなに平然と
してられるわけ？」

そういうのって

普通、結婚してから
じゃないの……？」



Having upswept hair similar to Shinonome, Aizawa becomes red while averting her eyes.

“It’s, very ecchi...why is everyone, so calm like that?

Usually, isn’t such a thing is for after marriage...?”

After a short silence, she looks downward, saying a few words alone.

“Maybe, I’m the strange one... “

Un. Aizawa, you are right Although I miss the timing to leave, it’s obviously not usual that these three are enjoying the current situation. You can have confidence in yourself.

Fun. It’s useless for you who keep company with various men to act like a pure heart person. Even with that, Kousuke won’t be swayed”

“Mo, mou, why does it turn out like that!? I said I’m not aiming at Ikuno!”

That’s correct. Such a thing like a bishoujo gyaru who is prided for her high popularity in school like Aizawa loving me is like the heaven and earth being overturned, impossible. This is not a light novel. (*err, wut?*)

“But Aizawa-chan, you keeping company with various men and being well-versed in love is the truth, right? Then I think this much is nothing though”

Perhaps, the “being well-versed with men” story that entered Senpai’s ears is the rumor from that meeting.

Etto...I, I”

Aizawa doesn’t deny. After all, for the sake of her gyaru friends who believed her, she swore to make her lie become true by repeatedly having a date with me.

“...I, I’m entering”

Biting her lips straight like the — (*ichi/1*) character, Aizawa has a stern face as if scolding her weak self With her long and slender bare legs which were always wrapped by a pair of loose socks, **zunzun** she walks to here (*sfx: quickly/rapidly*)

However, after several steps, when her eyes met mine, *kaa—* Aizawa became red.

She immediately turns to the left. Moving with a quick pace to the edge of the open air bath, she turned her back on at the farthest place from us and submerged to her shoulder in the bath. She seems apologetic,

“I, Ikuno. Don’t be offended by this. Different from everyone, I’m the only bad one...”

Aizawa doesn’t seem to have the composure, but to be able to handle her feeling until this time, she’s really a gentle girl.

Despite being weak at ecchi thing, I think she’s doing her best fine.

With a warm gaze like encouraging, I continued to stare at her exposed white nape.

“With that being the case, I think of having Ikuno-kun stay at the cursed place”

Dinner time. In front of the tray (*お膳, the four-legged tray for festive food*) while in yukata, we hear Shinonome’s words and stop our chopsticks.

Having become dizzy after having a mixed bathing with beautiful girls, I’m sitting in front of the fan.

“Etto...are you seriously saying that?”

“Of course. Ikuno-kun also said a while ago right? That you want to be useful, to solve the case. Because each person has their own role, I think of entrusting the responsibility for actual combat for a boy like you”

Oi, am I the fire sister from somewhere? Where’s the one responsible for planning...?
(*smell like monogatari-series to me*)

Somehow I feel like I was splendidly put into this condition. However

“Understood. If I’m fine, I’ll gladly accept”

Right now, as the approach “the reason that everyone in the club collapsed is the curse” is very likely, staying in that room is of course scary. However, my feeling of wanting to be helpful to solve this case even just a little was strong, I didn’t hesitate

“Good. If we know the identity of the woman in the cursed space, we should see the clue to the solution. Since this is an important job, it’s the most suitable one for you, the club president”

Shinonome, she must have thought of me and allocate this role. Despite being a bitch, she sometimes shows me her gentle side, so I’m troubled with how to treat her.

——*Doku, Dokun.*

Are...what? Again, my chest became hot suddenly. Seem like I become considerably dizzy.

This room’s air conditioning is sufficient, but I increase the air volume of the fan a bit more.

“Oi Kousuke...isn’t it fine to stop?”

“That’s right. Although it’s said that it would be fine if we do the ohara within 10 days, or if you are lucky...staying in the room where you can die is not necessary”

“You, you can refuse if you are scared. *Ho, hora*, I’m more or less the same, so...”

Ten-nee and senpai worry about me, and the obviously trying too hard Aizawa also feels anxious.

“Thanks for worrying. But I will do it. I’m a man and the club president, there’s no way I can leave that to the two female club members”

“...I see. But Ibuki, if nothing happens, isn’t staying at that room meaningless?”

“No. In case nothing happens, it’s the proof that nothing happened during the training camp. We should get the valuable information that whether that woman appears or not”

Aizawa who worries about me to the end bites her lips with an unpleasant, not-agreeing expression.

“Ikuno, we will be at this room, so if something happens, call us immediately. I don’t want Ikuno to be scared alone as much as possible. Besides, in the reverse standpoint, it’s absolutely scary”

Aizawa who thought about my feeling grasped the chest part of her kimono tightly with a slightly pale face.

“Thank you Aizawa. If you says so, I feel a little more comfortable”

The club member who worries about me is nearby, I must do my best somehow——
Then, at night.

“C, can’t sleep”

The large room which was too wide for me to use alone was too different to my house and I couldn’t fall asleep.

Besides, because the ghost may appear——

tte, it’s official that ghosts aren’t real. But, I imagine.

A light floating in darkness. A fresh corpse hanged on a rope, shaking like a *teruterubozu*. The solidified blood of Kihachi which soaked the ceiling. I can’t help but having goose bumps. (*teruterubozu is paper doll for weather praying*)

A, *kuso*——Although thinking about that is not good, I end up thinking about that no matter what.

But we have to go to school tomorrow, so I must quickly sleep somehow.

I close my eyes, arrange my thought to distract myself while departing to dream world. Perhaps because of the after-bath chill after being hit by the wind of the electric fan too much, I somehow got a slight fever.

How much time has passed after that? Also because of the fatigue, I was attacked by drowsiness before I noticed and my consciousness was about to become hazy.

gara——at that moment, suddenly there is the sound of the door being opened.

**zuri*, *zuri*, *zuri* ...*gosogoso* (rustling sounds)*

After hearing the sound of someone's feet rubbing the tatami mat, something climbs onto my stomach. As one would expect, my consciousness returned because of that, I looked up at that existence without letting out a sound.

".....Ten...nee?"

"u, un...Kousuke, it's me"

Although it was good that I can see the beast-ears-like things, I still thought that my heart would jump out. It won't be a joke if there is a woman wearing yukata and sitting on my stomach when I wake up in a room where ghosts appear.

Suppressing my heart which is painfully expanding and contracting, after having a deep breath, I somehow have a smile.

"Etto, what is Ten-nee doing here?"

"Because, I'm worry. Because Kousuke, since you was a child, has been bad at scary things. After consulting with senpai, I was told that it would be okay to secretly go at midnight...therefore"

"I see. You come here for my sake, right?"

"...un"

Ten-nee nods. But it looks like she still has something to say, her body shakes impatiently.

"Is there any other reason besides that?"

When I ask, she sends her gaze toward me, her index fingers entwine with each other.

"That...uu...I was told by senpai. If you want to connect with your beloved person, you can use this posture"

E, connect...ha, haha, that senpai.

Ten-nee put her lightly gripped fist to her mouth, her embarrassed face is dyed red,

then she murmurs with small voice.

“But I...don’t understand well”

Perhaps she doesn’t know what she should do. Ten-nee has the image of a healthy, sports-oriented girl who only focuses on the club activities, and is ignorant of those fields of knowledge.

...But, if it’s like that, because Ten-nee seems to have lots of stamina despite her small build, she might be amazing. (๖ ̎ ๖)

Then, while shaking off those bad delusions.

“Don’t mind what senpai said. Other than that, thanks, Ten-nee. I’m not the coward like I was in the past, but as expected, you make me calm down a little”

“It’s so after all...T, then, let’s do this like in the past”

Still red, Ten-nee timidly goes down from my body and lies down next to me, hugging my waist.

“E...Ten-nee, as expected, doing this at this age is a bit awkward?”

“S, shut up, it’s fine”

gyuu after burying her face (*to his waist*), she murmurs.

“Both Aizawa Manaha and Shinonome Ibuki are the onee-san type Kousuke likes. But I,

I’m this small...If it’s like this, Kousuke will be taken by those two”

Saying impatiently, Ten-nee puts more power into her hands.

Perhaps, half of it was “don’t want anyone to take me” desire to monopolize. The other half is the “must protect the little brother-like existence from two bitches” sense of duty.

I don’t know whether or not Ten-nee has the same nature as the powerful bitches, always want to monopolize me. But because it’s better compared to the past, it’s more

charming.

“Ano, Ten-nee, I’m not those two’s prey. Besides, no matter what I do from now on, the fact that Ten-nee is a special existence doesn’t change. Therefore, don’t worry”

“Kousuke... A, but, I’m small so I’m not your type”

“Ten-nee, I said this before, right? That I think tiny ones are also cute” (*pedo alert*)

“a...”

After looking at me with a surprised gaze, Ten-nee looks downward and nods “un”

“.....As expected, Kousuke is a lolicon”

“I beg you, don’t suddenly pick up such idea”

If that comes from a girl, perhaps I would be treated as someone with a pronoun *hentai*, but without being cautious to me, who was doubted as a lolicon by Ten-nee, she hugs me lovely on the contrary. The fear I felt until a while ago has fused with the desired warmth I feel from Ten-nee. To thank Ten-nee, I brush her head.

Ten-nee, who has been easy to fall asleep since the past, has begun making quiet sleeper’s breath.



Because she would wake up if I move, should I sleep like this?

Watching over the healthy, child-like Ten-nee's sleeping face, I also close my eyes.

The time is at the dead of night.

Then, the nightmare appeared.

**zuri* ...*zuri* ...*zuriiii* ...*

The sound of dragging feet can be heard from the entrance. That was an eerie sound that make my intravascular blood freeze. I'm too scared and couldn't open my eyes or breath directly. Soon, it came near and began going around Ten-nee and me.

P, perhaps this is...the thing Sakamoto-senpai saw...!?

It took one minute to complete a round, then another one minute for another round. The time where I feel like my thought becomes distant continues, then the sound of foot step nearby suddenly disappears.

...It left...already?

I swallow the accumulated saliva for several seconds as if I just remember. Moreover, excluding the time, there's no other sound, the strange presence also disappeared. I gradually come to my senses and open my eyes

Then, in front of my eyes, there was a face of a woman with disordered hair.

My consciousness was cut forcibly.

Next morning My face is being caressed by the morning sun, but my body is being shaken strongly so I open my eyes.

"A, are...Aizawa?"

"Finally, you awake...wait Ikuno, what's with this?"

Having worn the uniform, the slightly blushing Aizawa, in the state where her buttocks

are half-risen, humbly points at the my chest area.

Standing behind her is Shinonome, who is looking down on me while having a scary smile.

“E...this?...”

While rubbing my sleepy eyes, I look down to my chest, my breath is taken away and I stop moving,

With her kimono's chest part opened, Kamenno-senpai pressed her enormous breasts (bakunyuu) which are at the same level of the gravure idols against my chest, she let out the sleeper's breathing **suyasuya** as if feeling good. To make it worse, Ten-nee is hugging me with the same posture as last night, she rubs her forehead while sleep-talking, seemingly happy.

“Ikuno-kun, can you explain this to me too, without fail?”

“W, wait a sec, you two! This is, I also don't understand well——”

No, wait...That's right!

Certainly, yesterday I encountered the so-called ghost Sakamoto-senpai saw and fainted.

When I finish explaining briefly last night's things to those two, Ten-nee and senpai wake up and get up.

“——Then, Kamenno-senpai. Last night, why did you enter the room I'm in and go around?”

Right now, re-thinking about the face I saw last night, it was similar to Kamenno-senpai's. I'm sure that the one wandering around in the room was her.

Sitting like a girl on the futon, senpai rubs her sleepy eyes while her white shoulder are still visible. *(sitting like a girl is not a really correct expression, you can search image for the word 女子座り to see her pose)*

“Ee...I don't know anything like that. First of all, I remembered waking up at late night to go to the toilet then returning to the room, but I don't have any memory about after

that”

“nuu...certainly, at the morning of the second day of the training camp, Ayumu-senpai slept just like she had fallen onto Hayashi-senpai, and was laughed by everyone”

Ten-nee also rubbed her eyes with a posture similar to senpai’s.

Having a little complicated face, Aizawa suddenly changes her expression and claps her hands.

“A! In other words, wasn’t the ghost Sakamoto-senpai saw Kamenno-senpai!”

“Un. Even the situation is similar, I think so too”

We have identified the ghost appeared at the night of the training camp.

However, that doesn’t mean we have solved this case. It was not because of fatigue, food poisoning or contagious disease in the building. But a great amount of club members have collapsed with high fever with unknown cause after stayed in a cursed space, I can’t think of anything else other than the curse. However, it seems like just that information is enough for the strongest ACE of our literature club.

“I have solved all of this mystery”

Declaring the demise with a dignified, detective-like voice, she brushed up her damp hair.



I'm not surprised because Shinonome already said beforehand that she could solve the case if the identity of the ghost was found, but as she says so in this situation where we can barely get any hints, Aizawa opens her eyes while and looks at her.

"Ibuki...you solved with just that information?"

"Yes. Perhaps, all the club members who had to stay in bed would become healthy and go to school today"

Because of Shinonome's words, this time it's my turn to open my sleepy eyes wide to look at the two of them.

During lunch break on the same day. All members of the literature club were sitting on the sofa in the clubroom, facing Ten-nee, Kamenno-senpai and Kurashima-senpai, whose physical condition has recovered and returned to school.

Because our room doesn't have any electric fan, we can only rely on the breeze that sometimes enter through the windows.

"Then Shinonome, can you slowly tell us?"

"I want to hear it quickly too. I have been waiting until lunch time"

The answer I couldn't figure out no matter how much I thought. I and Aizawa were being impatient from the morning until now, we look at Shinonome from both sides with enthusiasm. Shinonome only nods with a calm expression.

Both Ten-nee and Kamenno-senpai looked at Shinonome with serious eyes too. Kurashima-senpai looked downward with a poor expression as her physical condition is still poor due to convalescence. Shinonome looked at senpai with a gentle gaze as if worrying about her while seemingly choosing her words, as if enjoying the noise of summer.

"" ..."

Ten-nee, who got tired of waiting for Shinonome, bends forwards.

"Shinonome Ibuki, how did you know!? As you said, until noon, all club member's

attendance had been confirmed, they went to school as if their fevers has gone down.”

“As the club president, I also confirmed. From third-year to first-year, all members had come to school properly. Ibuki-chan, how did you know such a thing?”

Having entered her club president mode, Kamenno-senpai raised her eyes’ corners and asked directly. On the contrary, as if relaxing, Shinonome lowered her eyelashes gently and closed her beautiful eyes

“Why did I know that. Before answering that question, can I ask the representative of the people who suffered the unknown illness, Kurashima-senpai?”

“...O, okay. But I still have a slight fever, please make it short”

“Of course”

Tiredly put her semi long black hair close to her ears, Kurashima-senpai coughs several times.

Kurashima-senpai surely seems to be in pain.

Because I also have a slight fever due to the chill after having a bath yesterday, I understand how she feels a little.

“Then without delay, regarding the period when your physical condition has recovered after falling ill, I want to ask you something”

“Yuki-chan. It’s fine not to force yourself, just answer slowly...”

“Un...Ayumu, sorry. I’ve make you worry”

To Kamenno-senpai who draws close, Kurashima-senpai smilesfrailly and straightens up There’s a tingle of red on her serious face, she seems more painful than expected.

“...On Friday last week, I was the last one to fall. The symptoms were just fever and coughing. But even when I went to the hospital, I was told that the cause was unknown, just like everyone else. The time it lessened gradually was yesterday, Monday’s night. Then when I woke up this morning, I feels that my physical condition has recovered and I could go to school”

As if because Kurashima-senpai told us in one go, her breathing become disordered and her shoulder move up and down just like after running.

“Everyone said the same thing as Kurashima-senpai’s...they became better from yesterday’s morning till today’s morning. But such coincidence, no matter how I think about it, it couldn’t happen normally”

“That’s right...Then, as expected, it’s that, right?”

“No, senpai”

Shinonome gently smooths down her elegant black hair and denies Kamenno-senpai’s words.

“...Shinonome, even with that, are you saying that it’s not the curse?”

“It’s natural. After all, there’s no such thing as a curse in this world”

Still declaring that here, it looks like she truly doesn’t believe in it at all. If Shinonome stayed in the cursed space, I’m sure that she would be different from me and would surely sleep immediately,

“Ibuki, but...Everyone fell ill with and unknown cause and got better at the same time, other than thinking it’s the work of that certain curse, there’s nothing else in my mind. Hora, although it was a rumor, wasn’t there a story that one would be saved after 10 days if lucky?”

“That. The culprit is someone among the club members, who knows about that rumor”

All people in this place are surprised by Shinonome’s remark. However, except one person...

“E, wait a sec Shinonome! After everyone had collapsed, even Kamenno-senpai and Tennen spoke without holding anything back, the one who knew the room was a cursed place among the club members should be Kamenno-senpai only, right? I think it’s impossible that another club member would know and abuse it”

“Certainly, as Ikuno-kun said. If they don’t know about it, they can’t abuse it”

However, Shinonome lets out a chuckle and opens one eyes,

“If they truly don’t know, right?”

“E?”

Being surrounded by question marks, my head turns around for a moment.

Assuming there’s someone among the club members who knew about the rumor, perhaps they would think of using it and have a break from school and club activities with everyone. Even if Kamenno-senpai suspected it, they can pretend not to know the rumor about the curse. They can say that they had a high fever with unknown cause and stayed in bed. Then, if they go to school 10 days later with an innocent face and say they were cured, they can put the fault on the curse

“...Then Shinonome is saying that there is a club member who knew the rumor about the curse, then tricked Kamenno-senpai and had a break from club activities with everyone without any good reasons, right?”

“Wait Ikuno. But how could they know? Among the club members, only Kamenno-senpai knows about the curse, moreover, she didn’t tell anyone, right? There’s no way to know it?”

“Aizawa-san, how the culprit knew the rumor, Kamenno-senpai should have known about that”

“E, me...?”

Suddenly being mentioned, the bewildered senpai points at herself.

“Hai. Senpai should have known it. The day of the training camp, the person who knows about the rumor, having a long talk with a certain member”

For just a moment, Kamenno-senpai stops moving. She held her mouth, opened her eyes and looked at the side.

“Don’t tell me, Yuki-chan?”

“...”

Kurashima-senpai puts both hands on her knees and looks downward, she breathes heavily with her shoulder moving painfully and remains silent. Yesterday, Kamenno-

senpai told us. The day when they came to the training camp, her obaa-san aka okami-san was pleased with Kurashima-senpai and had a long talk with her.

“The day of the training camp, after hearing the rumor of the curse from okami-san, I think Kurashima-senpai used that... no, however that’s——”

Before I can finish, Ten-nee bares her canines, stands up strongly and speaks for Kurashima-senpai.

“There’s no reason to do that! Even among the members of cheer club, Kurashima-senpai is completely the most hard-working person. There’s no way she would tempt everyone to skip without good reasons!”

Ten-nee glares at Shinonome who has taken a leading role of the conversation and shouts what she thought.

“Un, it’s as Ten-chan said. Yuki-chan is super diligent, she’s the vice president who strictly guides the members who skip training. Therefore I think she wouldn’t do such a thing, and since it truly looks like she’s having a cold, I don’t think she feigned the illness to skip”

Un, that’s a nice argument. Kurashima-senpai’s face is red and her forehead is sweaty, her physical condition seems bad just like that of a sick person. Because it’s proved that her physical condition was bad until yesterday, it doesn’t seem like she feigned it. Besides, I remembered our first meeting, she seemed to be a really diligent person, I think she wouldn’t lead all club members to quit club activities unreasonably.

Shinonome, who has her guess off, should be cornered by the dilemma.

However, she calmly looks at Kurashima-senpai, and with a gentle tone as if urging her to confess,

“Kurashima-senpai, isn’t it already fine? The truth is that it was for Kamenno-senpai’s sake, right?”

As if being moved by the farsighted whisper of a person who understands her solution absolutely,

Kurashima-senpai let out a big sigh. Her forelock sways as she wipes the sweat on her forehead with the back of her hand.

“Shinonome-san, isn't it? Amazing...so you know, huh?”

“E...then, it's Kurashima-senpai after all?”

When I ask, she nods lightly.

“I instructed everyone to stop going to school and doing club activities...that's correct”

“However, as I said that was for Kamenno-senpai's sake. By no means it's to skip the club activities”

Shinonome says like she has seen everything, I look at her with envy

“How did you know that much?”

“It's simple. Did something change before and after the event happened? Just by thinking about it, the culprit's goal can be found naturally”

I think about those words and look for the answer.

However, before I arrive at the solution, Aizawa who has a sharp intuition speaks.

“That reminds me, when we first met Kamenno-senpai, her physical condition looked super bad,

she was supported by Kurashima-senpai and Takatora-senpai, right? But her complexion was better and she was more healthy when we met yesterday...Ibuki, perhaps they are related somehow?”

Swaying her beautifully tied tail, Aizawa's eyes blink **pachipachi** as she peeks Shinonome's face.

“Correct, Aizawa-san”

Hearing those words, as if the dark cloud in her heart has vanished, Aizawa smiles brightly and says.

“The not-healthy person became healthy——In other words, to make Kamenno-senpai who had poor health rest, everyone used the feigned illness to stop doing club activities, right!?”

Shinonome says nothing but she casts down her eyes with a “not bad” face. Perhaps, Aizawa just hits the mark.

Kurashima-senpai doesn't object either, it seems like that's the real situation of this case.

Knowing that she herself had caused trouble for the club members, Kamenno-senpai is baffled “E, e,” unable to digest the situation well. Ten-nee also flustered, her eyebrows become 〃-character,

“W, why did Yuki-senpai do such a thing”

Receiving the words that seems to come out naturally from Ten-nee's mouth, Kurashima-senpai wrings out a heavy voice.

“Tenko also knows, right? The “forcing herself” nature of Ayumu. If she continued to try like that, she would collapse at the time of the final tournament and would regret it. However, Ayumu is not someone who would rest if she was told to rest. Therefore, I decided to make everyone rest and naturally stop the club activities”

In that case, Kamenno-senpai can't do club activities.

Being forced to rest several days, her physical condition would recover.

“...Yuki-chan, since when did you decide to do that?”

As if regretting causing everyone to worry, Kamenno-senpai asks apologetically.

Kurashima-senpai adjusts her breathing and answers with her body pitching forward to look for a rest.

“The day of the training camp, when I told okami-san about being troubled with Ayumu forcing herself too much, she told me the story of the curse for some reason. But at that time, I hadn't thought about doing something”

“But on the 2nd day's morning, after seeing Sakamoto-senpai collapse with high fever, you thought of the act”

Kurashima-senpai nods meekly at Shinonome's words,

“...because even at that time, Ayumu’s poor physical condition still continued, I always wanted to do something. Then, Aya’s thing happened, I thought of using the curse to make everyone rest several days. Although Aya, who really caught a cold, recovered a few days later, I explained the situation and got her cooperation”

“Ano...why, didn’t you tell me?”

Still standing, Ten-nee’s small body shrunk as she looked downward lonely.

Kurashima-senpai pushes herself, she has a smile full of the broad-mindedness of a senior.

“Tenko, you are similar to Ayumu. Saying because the last tournament of the third-year is close, you also tried too hard. Even if you have the highest stamina among the club members, you can’t last if that went on. Together, you and Ayumu were strict towards yourselves, you didn’t listen even if we told you to rest for only a day...Therefore, we decided to confuse you with the curse case and force you to rest. I was sure that even if you guys cooperated, you can’t practice yourselves”

Kameno-senpai and Ten-nee, who stoically try hard with the club activities.

Making those two rest, it was the motive of the club members.

Those two exchanged glances with an awkward face, then nodded at the same time and bowed to Kurashima-senpai.

“Sorry, Yuki-chan” “I’m sorry ,Yuki-senpai!”

The sincere apologies run like blowing off the heat in the room.

Then it would be the best if Kurashima-senpai easily forgave them and reached the happy ending, but of course, it won’t end that easily.

Kurashima-senpai brushes her forelock up and faces those two. Despite the languid appearance due to the heat, Kurashima-senpai forcibly tightens her expression, creating a bizarre appearance. Because of that Kameno-senpai and Ten-nee straighten their back.

“Ayumu, since you are the club’s leader, you must take care of your own physical condition more. Everyone relies on you, we can’t leave a good result at the tournament

without Ayumu. Do you understand?”

“U, un”

“Also Tenko, you are the club’s ace. For the senpai who will have their last tournament, to aid Kawagishi-sensei who is in maternity leave, I understand that you are desperate. But, the score of your performance should greatly change the result of the tournament. From now on, thinking about the pacing of practice with the awareness of an ace, okay?”

“...Ha, *hai!*”

An unsung hero. That word comes to mind when I see Kurashima-senpai.

Perhaps, until now, when something happens, senpai would skillfully fix it like this.

Each person has their own role——I remembered the words Shinonome said.

“*Hai*, the story is over with this”

As if Kurashima-senpai was satisfied with those two’s laudable attitude, she claps her hands **pan** before her chest and smiles.

“I also want our last tournament would be a good one. Therefore, in the remained month, let’s work hard even in the first day,

and make it a wonderful time like a fantastic memory”

“Yuki-chan...”

Certainly, it looks like Kamenno-senpai must succeed the ryokan after graduation. For her, the club activities until the tournament will be the last time she can devote herself to her favorite thing. Kurashima-senpai knows that, I’m sure she arranged this situation to let her bid farewell to her happy time to the very end. Receiving that thought from the words just now, Kamenno-senpai’s eyes became wet.

Three people of cheer club exchange words of apology and encouragement.

Seeing that, Aizawa and Shinonome exchange glances and smile.

With this, the case is closed. It was truly good that everything worked out peacefully.

...a, but wait.

Soon, choosing the timing when everything has calmed down, I asked one last question.

“Kurashima-senpai, the mastermind of this matter was you, I understood. But considering it was a feigned illness, you obviously seems to be in bad shape currently. I’m a bit bothered by that”

“E.....Ikuno, are you saying that it’s because of the curse?”

Aizawa is scared and she entrusts her soft-looking body to Shinonome. I say while smiling

“I don’t intend to say so particularly, but I’m honestly bothered”

“——A, it’s true...as expected, Yuki-chan, aren’t you quite hot. Hora, Ten-chan, try touching a bit”

Being told by Kamenno-senpai who touched Kurashima-senpai’s forehead, Ten-nee stands up and touches.

“Ua, it’s true... Senpai, this isn’t a slight fever. Are you alright?”

“Tenko.....this much, is fine...”

But, it seems to be more severe than before.

Her whole face is dyed red, Senpai exhales feverishly while sweating non-stop. “You should better go to the school infirmary. But before that, if it’s good, why do your physical condition become worse, can you tell me?”

Shinonome seems to be bothered by that only point, she has a demanding-like smile. Kurashima-senpai looked ambiguous, as if being overpowered by Shinonome’s aura, but she said briefly after hesitating a bit.

“——fufu. The reason of catching the cold, it’s really Yuki-chan-like. When you came to Aya-chan’s house to get her cooperation, you caught a summer cold”

“Hahaha...Kurashima-senpai has an unexpected playfulness, does she?”

After Ten-nee quickly carried Kurashima-senpai, whose physical condition is getting worse, to the school infirmary, the members of the literature club were sitting at the same position as before and had a friendly chat with Kamenno-senpai.

Although Kurashima-senpai instructed everyone to stop going to school to rest, it looks like she didn't intend to rest herself, just to see Kamenno-senpai's state. However, Friday last week, when she visited Sakamoto-senpai's house, the transmitted summer cold got worse, she finally reached her limit and had to rest.

“Ahaha...But Kurashima though that this plan must success no matter what, even if she caught a cold, did she?”

Un, that's surely true. Therefore, for her important friend's sake, she must have come to her house with resolution. Then the most silent person, Shinonome, says with a somewhat formal, calm tone

“Other than that Kamenno-senpai, is the solution of the matter about the chain of curse okay?”

“Un, of course. It's really good that I relied on the literature club. In the end, I was something like the cause so I'm really sorry, but thank you very much”

“No, we were also able to stay in an old ryokan, eat good food and enter a hot spring, it was enjoyable♪”

“Is that so——a, but my heart will hurt if I don't reward you guys, therefore if it's good, please come and stay at the ryokan again. If Ten-chan and I work, I think you can stay with no charge like yesterday”

Putting both hands on her cheeks, Senpai smiles amiably.

Making Ten-nee work without confirming the intention of the person herself, like a decided fact. Such tyranny.

No, it's so, huh? This person is also a bishoujo with attractive face and figure. Besides, the attribute is natural airhead.

The cautious level is wide difference between when the person herself aware or not,

but for now, it's fine anyway. There is something I have to do.

"Then Kamenno-senpai, when there are something you need again, please come to the literature club"

"Un, truly thank you. Then, I'll take my leave"

I know, I will do it...

I was glanced by Shinonome with an unconcerned look, saying "immediately make senpai go back".

"Please wait, Kamenno-senpai"

My voice shake the hot air of midday, senpai stops her legs immediately before the door.

"No, it's wrong. Should I call you like this?"

I say to that back.

"The sender of that certain letter, [Hanikamu Iyo]"

Sitting opposite to me, Aizawa seems to want to say "Is that a lie?" but she covers her mouth with her right hand.

Kamenno-senpai slowly turned back to look at me.

"Aree...How did you know? I missed the chance to tell, so I thought of keeping it a secret though"

Without hiding anything particularly, senpai easily admits.

I'm bewildered and don't know how I should response, so I only smile lightly for now.

"How did I know huh, well. If you thought about it carefully, it would be really simple. After all, lately, the persons who came to the literature club because of the referral of [Hanikamu Iyo] were mostly third-year students. The famous senpai whose

popularity is almost the same as our student council president should have received quite a number of consultations from your friends the same year. Therefore you could talk to the people coming to you to consult and send them to the literature club”

“Wait. But then you can argue that the president can also do that, right?”

“That’s right Ikuno. You can’t just arbitrarily decide it was Kamenno-senpai, right...?”

Bending forward to protest, Aizawa has a complicated expression as if she can’t accept it.

Perhaps because we was treated nicely while staying in the ryokan, a good girl like Aizawa can’t seem to accept that senpai is the culprit. Maa, in particular, the sender of the letter didn’t commit any crime, so there won’t be any punishment even if it’s senpai, I don’t think she needs to mind though.

When I looked at Shinonome, she coolly lowered her long eyelashes and listened to me carefully.

“*Etto*, that argument is unlikely”

“...why?”

Despite being asked by Aizawa, I turn toward senpai.

“When we received that letter from the person calle [Hanikamu Iyo], the clients who came with great number at the beginning, all of them were third-year, despite the disconnection about gender and the likes. Then the next person, Amami-senpai is the same. However, only one person is a second-year. It’s the treasurer of the student council, Tadokoro-senpai”

The silent atmosphere inside the room seems to say “So?”.

As expected, I’m not familiar with this atmosphere a little. Despite feeling the tension, I continue.

“Immediately after losing the key, Tadokoro-senpai said she was told by someone and came here. But during the time the key was lost until it was found, the president seemed to attend the committee meeting. In other words, it’s impossible to be consulted by Tadokoro-senpai and tell her to come to the literature club. With that

thought, the only person remained was Kamenno-senpai. Until recently, senpai seemed to enter and leave the student council as the president's assistant, so you being an acquaintance with Tadokoro-senpai is not strange, right?"

To support me who is trying despite lacking the experience, Shinonome says.

"...By the way, is Kamenno-senpai in charge of something in the committee?"

That day, for the school festival, everyone must attend the committee meeting. If she wasn't a committee member, it's possible to have time to receive the consultation from Tadokoro-senpai.

While smiling and pulling her chin a bit, Senpai shook her head. (in denial) Lastly, I say.

"And, about the name[Hanikamu Iyo], at first I thought it means [Smiling Iyo].

But it's wrong. The hiragana part is the family name, the katakana part is the first name, and it was coded with that meaning"

"Ikuno, what do you mean...?"

"It's a simple trick though, [Hanikamu] means the famous hexagon honeycomb structure, like a beehive. Then in nature, the other model thing with that shape is, for example——"

"The turtle's shell, right?"

With Shinonome's words, I nod deeply and says

"It was written in the letter, after testing the ability of the literature club, the culprit herself would come to request" Then senpai, who came to request us, has the [Turtle (*kame*)] character in her family name. "Iyo" is taken from senpai's first name [A YU MU], which was then moved one character in order in the Japanese syllabary [I YO ME]. Because senpai wanted to hide the fact that she was the sender of the letter, she removed the [ME], which has the same meaning in English, and called herself [Hanikamu Iyo]. Is it wrong?" (*A>I, YU>YO, MU>ME because the order in Japanese syllabary is A, I, U, E, O, with yu line is only ya, yu, yo. And since she wanted to hide "it was me", so she removed the "me", great pun, author*)

Because the naming sense is indeed like a student's play, even I understood.

Shinonome and Aizawa look at me with a little surprising eyes. Kamenno-senpai laughed sweetly.

"Amazing, Kousuke-kun. I thought you was only the person dominated by Ibuki-chan and Aizawa-chan, but you are a man who can something properly when needed, huh?"
(the word for dominated is お尻に敷かれてる, means being spread out under one's butts – showing the uselessness of a person)

"Maa...I'm also this club's president, I must try occasionally"

I return with a smile while scratching my head. I can't feel any sarcasm in senpai's words, I understand that she praises me earnestly without any intend to speak ill of me, perhaps because she's the unaware, natural airhead-san.

Aizawa who seems to agree with my reasoning asks senpai with an indecisive expression.

"Ano, senpai...I understand that you arrange the tests to test where we had the ability or not. But it's not the reason to allocate many requests with low difficulty at the beginning, right? You should understand our ability even if we solved just one case"

But Kamenno-senpai allocated a large amount of requests that can be said as easy to us.

"Senpai, it's on my mind too. Why was it necessary to allocate such amount to us?"

Shinonome seems to be eager for that answer, she slowly opened her eyes and stares at senpai.

"U—n, it's a little embarrassing though"

Senpai's white cheeks are dyed a little red, she joins her hands behind her back and shakes her long braid.

"I, I cheer because I love to be conspicuous. But, in the meeting the other day, the two persons who tried their best to save Aizawa-chan was more cool and conspicuous. Therefore I was envious, I wanted to do something a little mean...sorry"

Having a **tehe** smile filled with charm, she sticks out her tongue **pero** (the legendary tehepero)

I can lightly feel that she can't read the mood, but it indicates that she's indeed a natural airhead...

An enormous-breasted beautiful girl who brings about a calm atmosphere like a celestial maiden. If a girl with a perfect score in charm as a woman apologizes like that, I'm sure any men will forgive her.

Displaying her unaware, natural airhead-ness, Senpai is the unaware type natural airhead bitch who scatters accidents around unaware and obtains the benefits.

Unaware, in other words, an intrinsic natural airhead who doesn't notice she's like that, she can't do something shrewd like understanding her own nature and abusing it. Therefore, compared to the aware type semi-natural airhead bitch or camouflage type natural airhead bitch, she isn't dangerous at all, but because she may occasionally do something like being bewildered at charming lots of men unconsciously, throwing the surroundings into chaos like this time, the "bitch" part doesn't change.

Good grief, I was proved again. Beautiful girls are bitches, as expected.

I shrug my shoulders and smile bitterly.

"Etto...well, it's like that. A,ahaha..."

Senpai displays her natural airhead-ness without feeling shy. Aizawa is troubled with her response, she smiles and calls off.

"If it's a person with natural airhead characteristic then it can't be helped" tendency is strong. Therefore unless it's a serious thing, lots of people will just laugh and forgive. By the way, the aware type and the camouflage type bitch will take advantage of it though.

"Senpai, I have only one warning"

However, different from Aizawa, Shinonome doesn't seem to intend to laugh and forgive. The current literature club is more or less an official body of the consultation office, so the person who will become the manager of this school in the future seems to be unable to shut her eyes to something like arbitrary causing chaos. Despite the

smile, she said,

However, I interrupt and says. The reason is because I'm the club president.

"Kameno-senpai, this place is the important literature club I made, right now it's also a consultation office. Therefore, well...I can't say something too self-important, but from now on, we will be saved if you stop doing something like manipulating others because of individual emotion"

Aa, no good. I thought about saying it neatly, but I felt like it turned out to be very frail.

As expected, an otaku like me isn't suited for something like this.

Aizawa looks at me with admiration, but Shinonome stares at me like enjoying my incompetent self-importance. Kameno-senpai, as if sympathizing with my feeling sensibly, felt despondent.

"...it's like that, right? Doing that sort of thing because of my own convenience is no good, right? ...I, if I work at the ryokan after graduation, I can't make a mischief like this time anymore, so perhaps I wanted to enjoy like a child a little...really sorry"

Perhaps feeling bad from the bottom of her heart, Senpai lowers her head deeply.

If she apologize this politely, I can't really say something hard.

When I says "It's already alright", senpai raises her seemingly sad face. While seemingly hesitating,

"From next year, I will be mandated by my hated obaa-chan to work at the ryokan. Besides, because obaa-chan hates me, I'm sure she will make me work a lot without worrying about my physical condition. Thinking so, I thought I must enjoy myself right now. Sorry"

Senpai says so and tries to leave the clubroom.

"Please wait, senpai"

When I call out, senpai stands still while still turning her back on lonely.

I tell her with a gentle voice like cheering her.

“Okami-san was pleased with Kurashima-senpai, right? To tell a scary story about the room they were staying that day to the other party, was she trying to scare her?”

“...what, do you want to say?”

Leaving one beat, while choosing my words,

“The moment Kurashima-senpai consulted with okami-san about senpai, for some reason she told her about the rumor about the curse. Because of that, she was struck with the idea for the case this time, in the end, senpai’s physical condition recovered...this is just my prediction to the bitter end, but isn’t okami-san still fond of Kamenno-senpai until now?”

Her shoulders showed a **piku* (twitching)* reaction.

With this, she notices okami-san’s thought, it will be the best if those two reconcile today and return to a relationship similar to the past though——

“Impossible, such a thing is”

Unfortunately, my words were unable to persuade this person. It would be different if it was Shinonome, right? Like hearing a funny joke, senpai opens the door after letting out a giggle.

However, as if to comfort me who feel down, she lightly looks over her shoulder the moment she leaves.

“But thanks to Kousuke-kun, I feel at ease without worrying about karoshi next year”
(*karoshi is death from overworking*)

“a.....”

It seems like even I can be a little helpful to others.

Seeing senpai off, I feel like this time I was able to do something and the inside of my body becomes hot

Perhaps due to being relieved, at the same time she returned, I had a loud sneeze.

“Ara, did Ikuno-kun catch a cold?”

“...un, seems so. Since yesterday’s evening, I felt slightly bad”

When I smiled while rubbing my nose using the back of my fingers, Aizawa hid behind Shinonome, as if being frightened.

“Don’t tell me...you was cursed?”

Peeking quietly, Aizawa stares at me with a half worry half scared face.

“No, Aizawa...you don’t need to be scared that much. Hora, it was proved that the curse wasn’t real”

“I wonder. Maybe Ikuno-kun has used up his fortune for the conspicuous service just now, he might die after 10 days unless he did the oharai” (*the conspicuous service refers to his explanation about the letter*)

Despite not believing in the curse, she only used it at moments like this, huh.....

Rather, even if it’s a joke, Aizawa will be anxious if she says so——and then, sure enough

“Ikuno! L, let’s do the oharai! I will go together too!”

Looking at Aizawa, who doesn’t want to come close despite worrying about me, I smile wryly. In the room filled with a subtle sense of accomplishment, I felt slightly more cool than usual.



Etto. Despite acknowledging seriously that the timing is bad, but I must tell Sharte.

The evening of the same day, I stayed in our house’s bathtub together with my imouto Sharte.

If it was the usual, we would face each other and she would talk about various things, but today she turns her back on and doesn’t say anything. Maa, simply speaking, perhaps...she’s pouting.

Today, I hurriedly returned home after doing club activities. Having returned from the school before me, Sharte was sitting on the floor grasping her knees like an ornament,

then upon seeing my face she silently came to embrace me.

After that, I stayed beside her always as usual, but Sharte only said a few words. Then it came to this. I don't know how many time I have apologized.

"I'm really sorry. Sorry for making Sharte stay alone last Sunday"

"..."

Of course, silence. However, I don't intend to criticize her about that at all.

After all, the bad one is me. Because I broke the promise of always being together with Sharte. A promise when we were children, honestly it might be fine even if I didn't protect it. However, I obstinately continued to protect it. The reason is because I think Sharte is that important to me. Exactly because I understand we aren't related by blood, I want a definite connection.

——For now, until she forgives me, I can only apologize.

The moment I thought so and opened my mouth, Sharte muttered a few words.

"...nii-san, it's cold"

"E. cold?"

That's impossible. The hot bath is slightly hot, so such a thing like cold——

Then, I abruptly understood its meaning.

"Excuse me, Sharte"

Like wrapping up from behind, I gently hug her delicate body.

This time, without using words, I fulfill my responsibility by warming up the cold heart.

Then, I ask after a while

"Sharte, you are angry because I broke the promise, aren't you?"

Making a **bochan** (splash) sound, a drop of water from the ceiling causes a ripple on the hot bath's surface.

Sharte says, with a quiet tone that slightly echoes inside the bathroom,

“...it completely became a lie. However, I'm not silent because of that reason”

“What do you mean?”

I ask while staring at Sharte's exposed, white nape as she tied her hair up.

“From the past until now, Nii-san always protected his protect with me. However...”

Making a gentle short response to urge her, I receive the warmth from Sharte's soft skin. *(the short response is aidzuchi, short words like hai/un/sou/... to show that one's listening)*

I will receive everything even if she criticizes me. After all, I'm Sharte's brother.

“...only in 2 days, where Nii-san was away from home because of his own circumstances, my mind became fuzzy. Although until now, Nii-chan was always by my side for me”

“e...Sharte?”

Feeling the uncomfortable feeling in those words, I peek at her side face. From the unmoving expression and the doll-like eyes that I can't feel any vitality, I can't perceive anything. However, I understand.

“When I was a child, Nii-san refused the call of his friends to keep his promise, even if he was hated occasionally by that. Although he became a scapegoat for me, this me who didn't allow my beloved nii-san to spread his wings is a sister who don't have the qualifications to talk to Nii-san, I'm disqualified”

Sharte...you was silent all the time because of that?

Rather than getting angry, it seems like she was reflecting herself.

“Nii-san must hate, such a selfish imouto, right...?”

With her pure white skin faintly blushing, the beautiful figure like a princess turns around to look at me.

Is this the so-called splendidly beautiful woman? Despite knowing that this refined Sharte is my charming imouto, my hearts throbs a little. While suppressing my throbbing, I embraced the pure white, slender body even more.

“I don’t hate it, you know? In the first place, I think imouto is an even more selfish existence”

It’s not the information I got from someone who have an imouto, just my thought after seeing the 2D imoutos though.

“Besides, in comparison, Sharte isn’t selfish at all. You take care of everything in my daily life, there’s no better imouto. You are just someone who is slightly easy to feel lonely though”

“...slightly”

Murmuring with a deeply moved emotion, Sharte turns to the front and pretends to be silent. Soon she makes a **zabu** sound as she undoes my hug, then turns her body to me. After that, as if thinking about something, she suddenly took my left hand and invited it to the fluffy, soft, in the middle of its admirable growth swellings.

“A, *are*? Nee Sharte...what are you doing?”

In contrast to the excessive confusion, I ask after calming down and Sharte also calmly replies.

“Nii-san is unfair after all. Despite knowing I love Nii-san, why do you always say cool things? If you say it like that, it’s similar to saying you come to love me”

Sharte puts her hand on top of my left hand’s palm, then forcefully rubs her elastic milk tanks.

I hurriedly pulled my hand back from the swelling which is unable to be covered by one hand.

“K, *kora*! Can you not tease your Nii-chan?”

“I’m not teasing particularly. Other than that, Nii-san prefers bigger than smaller ones, right? Because Nii-san has been taking care since childhood, they’ve become this big safely. Everything is also thanks to Nii-san. Therefore, won’t you harvest them with your desire?”

“H, harvest...what are you?”

Sharte press her breasts against me like giving her body in, then murmurs to my ear sweetly.

“Please, make me a woman”

“Discard my virgin with my imouto!?”

First of all, as it was the usual thing, let’s decline with all my might. I separate our bodies and face her.

“Well. Because Sharte is my imouto, this brother can’t possibly make a move on the imouto, right?”

“Please don’t hold back. In fact, I know that Nii-san’s heart is **dokidoki** throbbing right now”

——uo! I’m being embraced again!

Why is today’s Sharte more obstinate than usual? Perhaps, was my response a while ago too good or something, and it furthermore polished her inner “brother’s girl”?

“...Nii-san”

Muttering in low volume, Sharte draws her cheek close to my chest and hugs me tightly, as if getting her tranquility. Perhaps it’s just my imagination, but when she closes her eyes, a seemingly happy smile is visible. She’s already a girl of marriageable age, being naked like this is bad. However, the imouto who wishes for me similar to when we were children is so cute, I unintentionally pamper her by stroking her head.

Then, the moment I thought of apologizing again as this time would be the last, I noticed that Sharte would be alone immediately as the school festival would be in this week’s Sunday. Therefore——



“Sharte. This week’s Sunday, won’t you come to my school’s festival? I don’t want to leave Sharte alone at home as much as possible. I will be on duty for my class’s exhibit, but it won’t take much time...when I have free time, we can go around my school together. How about that?”

In my chest, Sharte is pondering **fumuu**

Of course, I’m sure that the answer would be “yes”.

However, my prediction missed. Sharte stands up while turning her back on, wears the bath towel hanged nearby, leaves the bathtub and goes toward the door. Then she says a few words.

“I won’t go”

“E, what happened?”

I’m surprised and slightly raise my waist. Sharte’s indifferent voice resounds in the bathroom.

“This time, I was a bad girl who didn’t allow Nii-san to take a little breather. Since Nii-san won’t criticize me, I will punish myself instead. I won’t go to your school festival”

“Punish...it was me who was bad to leave Sharte alone, so it’s not necessary to do such a thing. Besides, isn’t it impossible for Sharte to be alone?”

She should be unable to stop trembling upon remembering the time she lost her family because of the war. When I returned home today, Sharte, while embracing me, was trembling like a little child.

“Being alone is certainly scary...however, thanks to Nii-san always being nearby until now, I believed you would always return so I could do it. Therefore, I intent to do my best somehow.

“Sharte...”

What to do, I’m really puzzled. I can pamper my imouto as much as I like. However, right now Sharte unusually intends to do her best willingly. After being troubled, I nodded.

“Intent to do your best although it’s scary, aren’t Sharte a good girl? As expected of my imouto”

“...Because if I remained a selfish girl, Nii-san might be stolen by that woman”

While murmuring something with a small voice, Sharte disappears to the dressing room.

But then she suddenly shows her face slightly from the door,

“Today, I will make a full course of Nii-san’s favorite Russia cuisine. Somehow, today Nii-chan has a face as if he has done his best, so this is a reward——”

Closing the door, after Sharte’s silhouette wipes its body, it begins to wear the underwear.

Just like I somehow understand Sharte, Sharte also seems to understand me.

The reconciliation with my imouto ended, the problems come from that certain letter were completely solved. Finally being able to take a breather, I soaked my body in hot water to the bottom of my neck to heal the fatigue accumulated in my body.

EPILOGUE

“A, here you are. Ibuki-chan and Kousuke-kun, enter this VIP room”

Sunday 5 days later, the day of the school festival.

Having finished our business with the maid cafe in the busy lunch time, I and Shinonome came to the cosplay cafe Kamenno-senpai's class exhibits. As the gratitude for the other days, we can order food and drink with no charge

“*Ua*, this is quite like a genuine VIP room”

“*Un*, amazing, right? It's just at a “to play around” level, but to make it like this, everyone tried really hard”

In a corner which was divided by the classroom's curtain, there were a set of red wine-colored, seemingly high class sofa and a short leg table which seems to be used by nobles, various first-class equipments, which seems to be brought from multiple houses, were placed nearby, and a red carpet was spread on the floor too.

“It surely looks nice. It feels somewhat like my house”

Shinonome smoothly praises, although it sounds like a flattery.

Shinonome's house is perhaps more than this...I feel like wanting to see once.

We sat on the sofa as recommended by Kamenno-senpai.

“Other than that, Ibuki-chan, that outfit really suits you, soooo cute”

The motif of the maid costume Aizawa designed was from “Alice in wonderland” story, a cute outfit made from clothes with refreshing color – white and light blue.

Because it is worn by a Shinonome, a high-level Yamato Nadeshiko, the outfit's charm is furthermore polished, so it looks like an excessively lovely and gorgeous thing.

“Thank you for praising it. Perhaps because of Aizawa-san's good taste, the customers entering was also flourishing. However, I think senpai's outfit is also really fantastic”

This fellow Shinonome, she is a devil when she's with me, but she's completely like an angel just now.

Completely feigning friendliness, I'm sure no one has noticed she's a two-faced bitch.

Senpai who was praised was being bashful while smiling.

"Thank you~ ♪ A, but you know, because the exposure is a bit too much, I can feel lots of men's gaze...*maa*, because I like being conspicuous so it's not unpleasant in particular though"

Senpai's outfit is the so-called bunny girl. Rabbit ears attached on her head, and the sexy leotard which exposed her deep cleavage.

This was properly OK-ed by the school, huh?

Moreover, the destructive power increases as the glamour Kamenno-senpai wears it, the rich pheromone and the obscenity around her will enchant anyone who continues to look straight at her.

"Please be careful. Since a while ago, Ikuno-kun has only look at Senpai's breasts"

"*Ha!?* I, I, I didn't look!"

Kuso, my obvious discomposure would expose that. Frankly speaking, I did see though, because I love the 2D huge-breasts onee-san so my soul reacted. It can't be helped

Thinking perhaps I was charmed, I timidly peek at senpai's expression.

"U-n...well——"

Senpai who is looking at me with her characteristic *tereme* (*drooping eyes*) like thinking something soon comes close in front of me.

"You know, other guys look at me with dangerous, ecchi eyes. It's scary

so I don't do something like this...but despite being stared by Kousuke-kun,

somehow it doesn't feel dangerous at all, so you can specially look more carefully♥"

Despite being stared by me——she says something similar to Aizawa's.

There should be many other quiet men, but am I the only one among them who has the harmless aura?

The moment I can calmly think about it, Senpai leans forward in front of me, the seemingly overflowing, melon-like swellings begin to shake happily **purunpurun**, making me blush.

“*Horahoraa*, they are amazing, right, Kousuke-kun? Breasts can shake this much～ Because the summer is hot, when they shake like this...the heat inside the cleavage will fly away”

“*ku...*”

The Holstein-grade milk tanks bounce, create afterimages and shake up and down indecently **tabutabu**

A, as expected of the unconscious-type natural airhead bitch. This way of unconsciously appealing her own sex appeal wildly and pointlessly seducing men is exactly like a bitch.

“A, *ano...*senpai, I think this service is a bit bad...”

“*Ee*, what's wrong? Kousuke-kun, Don't hold back, you can look much more. *Horaa～*
♪”

tabuntabun

furunfurunfurun

“*Ugu!?*”

This too sensational scene. Having a hallucination like my blood is regurgitating, I pinch my nose with both hands. Then the nearby Shinonome, with an extremely calm expression,

“Ikuno-kun, I wonder if you know? Around tonight, it seems like the Herdsmen's meteor shower can be seen. It looks like a minus 5 magnitude bolide can also be seen, so it's worth taking a glance, it was what reported in the news” (*according to wikipedia*,

the lower the magnitude, the brighter the bolide/shooting star is, with the brightest is at minus 9)

“...Shinonome, why do you suddenly talk about star?”

However, without answering my question, she only smiled sweetly and said this.

“It’s good to see it, that star”

“E...?”

“It’s good to see it, that star”

In other words, it seems like Shinonome wants to say this.

Before me who will be your master, if you are more carried away than this, I will delete you tonight――

――if it’s like this, it’s certain that I will be killed by Shinonome!

I hurriedly grasped Senpai’s bare shoulders and stopped the shaking milk tanks.

“Kousuke-kun, it’s already alright?”

“I beg you, please stop, please. O, other than that, can we order?”

“a...that’s right. Then, please look here and decide the dish you want to order”

The two of us look at the menu and order.

Having taken the order, senpai disappears to the other side of the curtain, and the unpleasant time with Shinonome flows. However, she didn’t torment me with words. Instead, she stepped on my foot...

Soon the curtains open as someone enters, so Shinonome’s foot tormenting ends.

“Thank you for waiting――*tte*, are...the literature club’s...”

“Amami-senpai...you are in the same class as Kamenno-senpai?”

“U, un. I’m in the same class as Ayumu-chan. She always listens to my consultation so we are really close”

Exactly because she consulted Kamenno-senpai, she came to the literature club, it was like that. Rather, as if she’s still thinking I’m a pervert, senpai pulls back while holding the tray. By the way, she’s cosplaying as a Miko, the hakama is obviously shorter than the uniform’s skirt, so she seems to slightly mind me.

Despite minding my gaze, senpai lines up the cake set of Shinonome, then “Thank you for waiting!...are, isn’t that Kousuke!?”

“E, why is Ten-nee working in the third-year’s classroom...!?”

“That’s true. However, other than that, such an amazingly cute appearance, aren’t you, Takatora-san?”

“...Shinonome Ibuki, you are also together with Kousuke today too, huh?”

Ten-nee glares sharply with a glint at Shinonome, but after recalling the words she was told, her cheeks are dyed crimson.

“*nuu*...don’t look, too much... I, I...it’s not like, I’m wearing this because I like it...”

The volume reduced at the end of the sentence, Ten-nee’s small body is squirming while she’s still holding the tray. Having an appearance befitting the name “Takatora Tenko”, she’s wearing an obscene panties which is like a tiger-striped bloomers, and her chest is covered with the same tiger-striped bikini, the cute navel is in full view. There are tiger’s ears on her head, as well as tiger’s tail at her buttocks. Embarrassed at the high-exposure appearance, Ten-nee’s face becomes redder.

“Takatora-san, because the cheer club’s outfit also has lots of exposure, you don’t have to be that embarrassed, do you?”

“Cheer’s outfit is for healthy club activities. However, this is somehow...erotic”

Un, somehow I understand what she wants to say.

Despite her embarrassing, ecchi appearance, Ten-nee lines up my portion of the table.



高虎天虎

たかとらてんこ

「……だってあんたのこと、
まだよく分からないから
知りたいんだもん」

愛沢愛羽

あいざわみなほ

「耕介くん、遠慮しないで
いっぱい見ていいんだよ。ほらま〜」

亀乃あゆむ

かめのあゆむ

東雲伊吹

しのめいぶき

「この私を普通の女の子と
同じように扱ったなんて、
舐めたものね」

「んっっ……あんまり、
見るんじゃないぞう……。
わ、私だって……好きでこんな格好、
してるんじゃないんだあ……」

Then Kamenno-senpai came, and treated me and Shinonome ice tea.

“Because we were slightly short of manpower, Ten-chan helped us——Other than that, I’m bothered, but why Aizawa-chan isn’t here?”

Because I worked behind the scene all the time, I answer after moistening my throat with ice tea.

“The poster girl Aizawa and Shinonome must not disappear at the same time, so Aizawa made Shinonome have a break first as she worried about Shinonome who were the member of both the student council and the school festival executive committee. Perhaps, if the other side calmed down a little, I think she will come immediately”

“I felt guilty to Aizawa-san. That girl was the same as me, having been always working since this morning...”

Shinonome’s words are almost like a lie or a joke on the surface, but as if the feeling regarding Aizawa is real, her well-ordered face is dyed in unhappiness.

“Shinonome doesn’t have to be worry. When this free time is over, you will have to continue with the student council and the committee’s works until the closing ceremony”

“*Maa*, that’s true though...”

Nonetheless, I’m sure it’s also hard for Aizawa, who has been working for a long period of time.

Despite that, she worried about Shinonome and postponed her own break. Therefore, I honestly want to think of her as a really gentle girl who can sympathize with other people——however.

...Aizawa hasn’t returned my important manga.

Whether something like an otaku like me’s thing is trivial, or she’s vaguely trying to tell me that returning is troublesome, Aizawa hasn’t said anything like that at all. Last week, also she said she would return when I told her,

But in the end, it’s still like this.

“Ettoo...Other than that Ibuki-chan, this time you also played an active part, rightt?”

Looking at my and Shinonome’s gloomy face, Kamenno-senpai changes the topic.

“In Clair’s case too, Shinonome-san was amazing...”

“...I don’t want to recognize it, but I also think Shinonome Ibuki is amazing. If that fellow wasn’t there, it would be hard to solve the curse case”

Hahaha...Ten-nee, my feeling hurts if you say that frankly, but well,

since the majority of thing isn’t wrong so it can’t be helped.

Shinonome glosses up her previous expression and waves one hand **hirahira** in front of her face.

“Noo, I’m not important at all. Everything was because of Ikuno-kun and Aizawa-san’s cooperation. I only did what I should do”

“Ibuki-chan’s way of thinking is also wonderful, as expected of the only heiress of Shinonome conglomerate. I would fall in love with you despite being a girl♪”

Then, the moment Kamenno-senpai made a dangerous statement, there is the sound of Ten-nee-tachi calling from the other side.

“A, we must go now! Bye Kousuke, enjoying slowly”

“The VIP room is reserved for a while, so don’t mind...just use it...”

Amami-senpai, I won’t do any peculiar play, so please stop that strange, implying way of talking.

“Then, I will guide Aizawa-chan when she comes, so enjoy it, okay?”

Kamenno-senpai also disappeared to the other side of the curtain, finally there were only me and Shinonome.

“For now, shall we eat?”

“Oh well”

Silently saying so, Shinonome uses the fork to carry the cake to her mouth elegantly.

Although this is the so-called private room, but there are people nearby, so Shinonome doesn't flirt with me. Perhaps it's troublesome if her true nature is exposed to the surrounding. Truly a calculating girl, Shinonome.

I bring up a subject while laughing like being amazed.

"Shinonome, what you said just now are lies, right? In fact, you think everything was thank to you, right?"

"ara, that's not true. It was thank to you two's help. After all, in Clair's case, I was saved by Aizawa-san's nose. And because of being engrossed with the settlement of the curse case, I forgot about the letter case, but Ikuno-kun solved it. So, it's not just my power, right?"

"Maa, if you says so then..."

I think it's true in Aizawa's nose case. But, Shinonome should have known the sender of the letter. Despite that, knowing that I was troubled as I wasn't helpful despite being the club president, I'm sure she handed over the achievement on purpose.

Haa...I have no choice but to recognize it. Shinonome is a good fellow despite being a bitch.

——*dokun.*

"However, Ikuno-kun. This time, I solved most of the cases, right?"

Sucking the ice tea with a straw, she stares at me with her filled with joy pupils.

"Looking from any perspectives, I think it's true. But what's wrong with that?"

Shinonome quickly shortened the distance, and looked up at me at point-blank range.

Despite its low volume, the scent of the elegant perfume easily destroys my reasoning.

"Reward your master, please. I did my best for the literature club" (*baka, it's not the words a master should say*)

Uu....she intended to this after all, huh?

She looks at the troubled me with the testing-like eyes.

Reward...even if I give this fellow an expensive one, she would already have a much better one. I completely don't know that Shinonome is delighted. U—n, reward, reward...

I didn't know what I was thinking, but I brushed the head of the high pride ojou-sama of a conglomerate.

Stroking the soft, high quality black hair, I notice.

A, crap. That reminds me, it seems like it will backfire if you do it to a high pride girl...of course it's a knowledge gotten from galgame though.

Then sure enough, Shinonome says this.

“Treating this me like an ordinary girl, are you making fun of me?”

Crap, she got mad. Making a dangerous, neat-type bitch mad, I grow pale. However, I didn't feel the anger on Shinonome's face.

She returns to her place, her pitch-black hair sways like a curtain.

“Maa, it's fine. The case this time, just treat it as even”

Are, somehow, doesn't Shinonome's mood become good?

...perhaps, because of always being treated as an ojou-sama of a conglomerate by the surroundings, she's happy of being treated like an ordinary girl.

Being happy just by having her head brushed, Shinonome is more like a girl than I thought.

— — —*dokun.*

N, no...wait, calm down, me.



This time, I understand how omnipotent Shinonome, who can solve any problem, is. She has a strong mind, doesn't have a slightest thought of wanting support——I suddenly remember. The time in Clair's case, the figure of girl who didn't want to cry in front of others shedding tears alone in the corner of the room in order not to be noticed by anyone.

———*Dokun.*

Wait wait wait, it's fine so calm down a bit.

R, right, weaknesses! This fellow doesn't have any weaknesses.

Therefore, she doesn't have the slightest thought of wanting to be protected——at that moment.

Perhaps being attracted by sweets, the “thou name shall not be called” certain G creature —— in other words, gokiburi (*cockroach*) crawled at my feet. I'm surprised and unintentionally jump back.

“Oi, Shinonome, there's a cockroach!”

“E...?”

Drinking the ice tea elegantly, Shinonome's grasped that and she hardened.

Then the next moment——

“*Hyaa*”

...e?

Catching the spring up and embracing Shinonome, I held her in a princess carrying position.

The always calm Shinonome let out such an unthinkable lovely voice.

“W, what are you doing, Ikuno-kun. Quickly do something”

“You, perhaps you are poor with cockroaches?”

“...you, what kind of thing are you thinking of me as?”

Glaring at me frustratingly, she trembles while blushing.

Shinonome also had it. The indeed cliché, girl-like weakness.

The moment I thought so, I can't deceive myself anymore and became strongly conscious of her as an opposite sex.

——Dokun, dokun, dokun.

Wrong, wrong, wrong wrong wrong, that's impossible.

Frantically averting my ears from the noisy beating, I try to do something to the cockroach at my feet, but because both hands are occupied, I can't do anything. At that moment, the curtain was suddenly opened.

“Sorry! There were lots of customers after that, too”

Being wrapped in maid clothing, the three times cuter than usual Aizawa enters while smiling bitterly.

But upon catching the two of us in her vision, her face is dyed red in an instant as she yells

“W, wait! You two, what are you doing in this place!?”

Covering her mouth with both hands while being confused, Aizawa opens her big eyes wide and stares at us.

Aizawa, she splendidly misunderstood...

When I somehow explain the circumstance to her, after murmuring

“A, it's like that”,

“——Wait a second, Ibuki, I will exterminate it immediately!!”

To protect her close friend, Aizawa raises her eyebrows and takes off the slipper, then slowly approaches G and “ei” hits G without hesitation as her hairdo swings. Such

manliness, I end up being taken aback a little.

“Aizawa is unexpectedly okay with that, huh...?”

“Ehehe, well yeah. I’m bad at ghost and the likes, but as I always cook in the kitchen, I feel like I got used to fighting them. Despite the sanitary, cockroaches always come out no matter what”

Because girls are normally afraid of G, somehow I can feel her strong-willed.

Eventually, treating like nothing happened, Shinonome gets off me and coughs **kohon**

“Other than that, since Aizawa-san also came, shouldn’t you order cake and drink?”

Showing her two-faced nature, I’m astonished by the quality level of her switchover. Her smile is dazzling.

After Kamenno-senpai brings Aizawa’s portion, we eat the remaining cake.

“A! This tastes like Garnir’s cake!”

“Yes, I thought so too. Because Aizawa-san’s recommendation was really tasty, I remembered the taste just after eating twice”

“Is that so? To think Ibuki is pleased that much, I’m happy♥”

Sitting on the other side of me, Aizawa who laughs happily asks.

“Ikuno too, is it delicious?”

U...the full score in destructive power smile like that of a galgame heroine on the guide book is too cute. However, because of the manga incident, I can’t honestly be pleased.

Then, in the blink of an eye, the time of the school festival passed —

Having finished the closing ceremony, I tidied up our classroom’s coffee shop.

I talk to various people in the class moderately but paying attention not to be conspicuous. Because Urotan is a shingakukou so the school festival only lasts one day. (*shingakukou is a school centered on preparing student to get into university*)

Listening to the regretting voice while hastening the work, I heard a voice calling my name reservedly from the corridor.

“Ikuno, come here...”

It's Aizawa. She's brilliant and conspicuous as she's still wearing the maid cafe's clothing, but the people in the corridor and everyone in the classroom are being pressed to clean up, so they can't turn their gaze to the girl who always attracts attention.

“...What's wrong?”

I leave the classroom while minding the surroundings. Then, I face her on the corridor where many students come and go busily.

“Well, there's something I want to say...”

W, what?

It's visible that she's joining her hands behind and hiding something.

Somehow, it looks like an event CG from the game.

“Sorry!”

“E?”

She bended forward deeply and apologized, I become confused for a short while at the unexpected incident.

At the same time, Aizawa presented a **kirakira** glittering, pink-colored plastic bag.

“I'm sorry for being late to return”

As she said so while still in that posture, I received that while thinking “perhaps...” then checked the content. Inside the vinyl, as if packing an important thing, there's

something being packed in wrapping paper, when I open it to check—’

“A, this...”

It is the special manga I lent to Aizawa.

Perhaps, because I said this was my most favorite, she treated it this careful? (enter)

“But, why...”

Having various doubts, those words suddenly go out from my mouth.

Aizawa raises her head, for some reason her cheeks are slightly red and she looks awkward.

“In fact, because it was Ikuno’s most favorite manga so I thought of returning it quickly, so I immediately began reading on the day I borrowed it. I planned to return it on the next day, but...”



Then she is silent, so I ask worriedly.

“*Etto*...then, why did it become this late?”

“That is...because, that manga...”

Aizawa bites her lips tightly. But the girl who has a strong-willed part doesn't want to lose to herself. Her expression tightens, she raises her seemingly angry face.

“This manga, why is it so ecchi. Therefore, I became embarrassed every time I opened those pages...I completely, couldn't keep reading...”

Gradually, the force in her tone weakens, as if remembering she's working, the tinge of red on her face increases.

A, that's right...

The manga I lent to her is the wonderful harem type where protagonist solves various heroines' problems and is gradually charmed by the said heroines, finally receiving happy end. But as Aizawa said, extremely sensual scenes frequently appear.

Aizawa is a pure girl who thinks that it's impossible to enter the bath together with a man. Therefore, being unable to keep reading, she ended up returning it this late.

tte, then wait.

Isn't it because of my lack of consideration!? Moreover, I doubted Aizawa although it was my responsibility. I'm seriously the worst, the lowest...

In other word, because Aizawa didn't have any responsibility, she's not a bitch.

I sigh a relieved breath in my heart.

Aizawa is the first non-bitch bishoujo I've met. I really believed so somewhere in my heart. Relief and happiness suddenly fill the inside of my chest and something hot begins to gradually spread.

——*dokun*.

“I lacked consideration, really sorry...then, you almost hasn't read it, right?”

“U, *uun*...I tried and read everything. After all, I want to know more about Ibuki and Ikuno...”

“E...?”

She wanted to know about me, so she tried and read it for several days despite being poor at it?

What’s that....As expected, isn’t Aizawa an extremely good girl?

——*Dokun*.

“...after all, I don’t know much about you, so I want to know more. About the only boy I can talk to”

Maa, that’s also true. It’s not unnatural to have a slight interest, right?

———*Dokun*.

“And recently, when I’m with Ikuno, I have a feeling which I have never known before. To know what it is, I think it’s necessary to know more about you” (enter) Aizawa suddenly has a worried look and puts her hand on her chin, then she says with a serious expression.

“I see. Then...this time shall I lend you a non-ecchi work among my favorites?”

“A, there’s such a thing too!? Then lent it to me!”

Haha, Aizawa is also this assertive too, huh? Moreover, knowing that she can know more about me, a sun-like dazzling smile blooms.

If she shows me that attitude, even if I know it’s wrong...

——*dokun dokun dokun*.

Even if I deny, my heart is being tormented by the strong rumbling as if confirming that feeling.

Then, upon being called by a certain girl from behind, the amplitude becomes much bigger.

“Ikuno-kun, you was with Aizawa-san, huh? I’m sorry but there’s something I need your help, I wonder if you can go with me for a sec?”

As if being unable to stomach me talking to Aizawa by just the two of us, she lightly pulls my sleeve.

Because of that, the strong sound resonates in my eardrum to the point of making me think “my heart is inside my head, isn’t it?”

Then, Shinonome seems to notice my abnormality, she stares at my face with the seemingly interested, happy eyes.

“Ara? What’s wrong Ikuno-kun, I feel like your face is red though...are you alright?”

Hearing those words, Aizawa worriedly stares at me at point-blank range similarly.

“True. If you feel slightly bad then how about going to the school infirmary?”

My face becomes red. My heart is expanding and contracting to its limits. The sweet scent of two girl filled my head.

It can’t be...it can’t be.

It can’t be it can’t be it can’t be.

This me, such a thing.

Despite how much I’m trying to deceive myself, this long-continued emotion overflows from inside. What is it, I strongly remember.

I, to the bitch Shinonome, and the bishoujo Aizawa――

Falling in love to both of them at the same time is impossible.

Because, isn’t it like that?

Because I should have detested both bitches and bishoujo.



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